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Italian Drama

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE, ENGLAND

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VOLUME V

The victims appear under condemnation; they arrive at the place of execution; the fagots are in readiness; the dreadful malediction is pronounced, and they are about to be delivered to the flames.

THE AUTO DA FÉ—PINDEMONTI.

Historical Publishing Company

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Masterpiece—painter unknown

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PROF. JOHN P. LAMBERTON

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VOLUME V

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Prologue



TALY led the van of European nations in the Renaissance. That glorious land preserved monuments and memories of classical antiquity even when arts and literature had been buried under the ruins of the empire. There the Latin language, cherished in the ritual of the church, had never become entirely dead. After the invention of printing and the influx of learned Greeks, driven by the Turks from Constantinople, Italians eagerly embraced the study

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of the classics. The humanist leaders sought to rival Cicero and Virgil, Seneca and Terence, first by direct imitation, then by free translation, finally by boldly original compositions. At this epoch in the sixteenth century we take up the story of the drama in Italy.

Tasso, the latest of Italy's four great poets, is honored by the world as the author of *Jerusalem Delivered* and pitied as the lovelorn lunatic. He should also be remembered and admired as the originator of a new species of the drama—the lyrical pastoral play, which has been perpetuated in the modern opera. To the mild genius of Metastasio is awarded the palm for this final form in which music predominates over acting. His themes were taken from ancient history and mythology, the stories are full of pathos and tenderness and the melodious verses sing themselves.

While luxurious courts were delighted with such poetic dramas, a rude comedy had long flourished among the people in spite of the condemnation of the Church and the good-natured contempt of the refined. It was distinguished, like the classical drama, by the use of masks

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to designate actors of different classes, who indeed were required to speak in different dialects. To these characters we owe the familiar terms Harlequin, Pantaloon and Columbine.

A singular feature is that, though the manager sketched an outline of the play, the actors improvised their own dialogue. With an uncultivated audience this illiterate performance naturally abounded in coarse jokes and downright indecency. At last a reformer appeared in the person of Carlo Goldoni, who, after years of persistent labor, succeeded in inducing the people to accept and enjoy unmasked plays depicting the actual life of Venice.

This universal pursuit of frivolity, this degradation of the once soaring genius of Italy, was undoubtedly an effect of the lack of national unity and independence. The land which had given law to the civilized world was broken up into provinces crushed under foreign tyrants, petty duchies ruled by pleasure-lovers, and jealous republics dominated by factions. Free thought was suppressed, while academies were multiplied to purify speech but not morals. In

PROLOGUE

the arena of literature Italy lagged behind, while England, France, and Germany contended for the prize.

At the end of the eighteenth century came the great tragic poet Alfieri, who, after unlearning his native tongue, regained it to achieve its redemption. Late in beginning to write, he was marvellously industrious and published thirty tragedies, besides comedies, satires and a notable autobiography. His spirit is reflected in the revival of tragic acting in our own day, as exemplified in Ristori and Salvini. Manzoni, whose fame rests on his novel, *I Promessi Sposi*, composed two good tragedies, but without the fire and force of Alfieri. Nicolini achieved even greater success.

In the nineteenth century in Italy as elsewhere the novel has enlisted the efforts of genius. The stage has depended on importations from France. Yet D'Annunzio's dramas have been well received by his fellow-countrymen, though not attaining the praise of his sensuous lyrics and highly spiced novels.

The examples presented in this volume furnish an adequate conception of the wide range of the dramatic genius of Italy.

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Italian Drama.

I.

Tasso and the Pastoral Drama.

Torquato Tasso and Giordano Bruno, though usually included among the authors of the later Renaissance, may perhaps be better classed with the moderns. In their day the spirit of the Renaissance was worn out, and was replaced by the nervous fear which is visible all through the life of Tasso. The church authorities were endeavoring to make Rome moral by methods which might have commended themselves to the English Puritans, and commendable as was this attempt to restrain the license of the earlier Renaissance, it was still an example of the attempt to repress which was being made everywhere in Italy, and which succeeded because it had only to deal with men of a weak generation.

The life of Tasso is of itself enough to show under what a gloomy cloud literature had to work in Italy all through the later sixteenth century. It was a life of dependence dominated by fear—fear of rivals, of accusations of heresy, and even of murder. He was born in 1544, the third son of Bernardo Tasso, who was

secretary to the prince of Palermo, later becoming a dependent at the court of Urbino, where Torquato, who developed into a handsome and brilliant lad, became the companion in sports and studies of the heir to the dukedom. Here the boy read much, but nothing of the law, for which profession he was intended, and wrote his epic poem, the *Rinaldo*, much to the displeasure of his father, who wished him to qualify for a lucrative calling.

Tasso at Ferrara.

But Torquato had resolved to be a poet, and as it was necessary to find a patron for him, he was introduced to the court of Ferrara. He was now in his twenty-first year, tall, handsome, graceful, and somewhat of an athlete. He had already begun his great epic, *Jerusalem Delivered*, and his tragedy of *Torrismondo*, and had written his *Discourses on Epic Poetry*. The duke of Ferrara, Alphonso II d'Este, received him graciously, and appears to have treated him, in the main, with great kindness. The lyrical drama *Aminta* was composed and performed during the earlier years of the poet's stay at this typical Italian court.

Insanity.

When Tasso accompanied Cardinal Luigi d'Este to Paris he imagined that some treason was being plotted against him at home. Later he thought he had been accused of heresy, and refused to be pacified by the assurance of the duke and the head of the Inquisition,

to whom he submitted his writings. He fled twice from Ferrara, and twice came back. He began to accuse the duke of intending to have him murdered, and finally drew his dagger in the palace on a servant whom he suspected of trying to poison him.

In other respects Tasso behaved so much like a lunatic that finally the duke's long sufferance gave way, and the poet was sent without ceremony to the mad-house at Santa Anna, where he was kept for more than seven years, but was not harshly treated. After a few months he obtained spacious apartments, received the visits of friends, went abroad attended by responsible acquaintances, and corresponded freely with whomsoever he pleased. In his epistles he always spoke respectfully and even affectionately of the duke; but what appears in them most clearly is that he labored under a serious mental disease and was conscious of it. He complains that his disorder at times amounted to frenzy, after which his memory was weakened and his intellectual faculties enfeebled. He saw visions and heard phantom voices. Spirits made away with his books and papers. The old dread of poison returned. His bodily condition grew gradually worse, and though he does not seem to have suffered from acute attacks of illness, the physical and intellectual constitution of the man was out of gear.

Yet everything that came from the insane poet's pen during this period was carefully preserved by the Italians. In the year 1580, he heard that part of his *Gerusalemme* was being published without his permission and without his corrections. Next year the

whole poem was given to the world, and in the following six months seven editions issued from the press. The prisoner at Santa Anna had no control over his editors, and from the masterpiece which placed him on a level with Petrarch and Ariosto he never received one penny of pecuniary profit. Battista Guarini, then a rival poet at the court of Ferrara, undertook to revise and reëdit his poems in 1582, and Tasso, in his cell, had to allow odes and sonnets, poems of personal feeling, occasional pieces of compliment, to be collected and amended, without lifting a voice in the matter.

Wanderings.

In 1586 Tasso left Santa Anna at the solicitation of Vincenzo Gonzaga, prince of Mantua. He followed his young deliverer to that city, basked a while in liberty and courtly pleasures, enjoyed a splendid reception at his paternal town of Bergamo, and produced his tragedy of *Torrismondo*. But within a few months the poet grew discontented. Gonzaga, succeeding to his father's dukedom, had scanty leisure to bestow upon him, and Tasso felt neglected. In the autumn of 1587 we find him journeying through Bologna and Loreto to Rome, and taking up his quarters there with an old friend, Scipione Gonzaga, then patriarch of Jerusalem. Next year he wandered off to Naples, where he wrote a dull poem entitled *Monte Oliveto*, returning to Rome in 1589 and again taking up his quarters with the patriarch. But the servants found him insufferable and turned him out of doors, after which he fell ill and

went to a hospital. In 1590 the patriarch again received him; but Tasso's restless spirit drove him forth to Florence; yet soon to Rome once more, then Mantua, then Florence, then Rome, then Naples, then Rome again. Such is the weary record for the years 1590-4 of a man who "wandered like the world's rejected guest," and yet was always met with the honor due to his illustrious name. At this time everything came amiss to Tasso, even though the palaces of princes, patriarchs, cardinals, nay even of popes, were open to him. But he could rest in none; he was out of joint with the world, and no sensuous comforts, no tranquility of living soothed his vexed soul.

Last Days.

But just when mental disorder, physical weakness and decay of inspiration seemed dooming Tasso to oblivion, his old age was cheered with a ray of hope. Clement VIII, who ascended the papal chair in 1592, and his nephew, Cardinal Aldobrandino, determined to befriend the poet. Two years later they invited him to Rome, where he was to assume the crown of bays, as Petrarch had assumed it, on the Capitol. Lean and worn with sickness, and ready to totter into the tomb, where at length rest might be found, he reached Rome in November. The ceremony was deferred because the cardinal had fallen ill, but the pope assigned the poet a pension and induced Prince Avellino, who held Tasso's maternal estate, to discharge a portion of his claims by the payment of a yearly rent charge. At no time since

he left Santa Anna had the heavens so smiled upon him; money and Capitolian honors were now at his disposal; but his good fortune came too late. Before the crown was worn or the pension paid, came his last illness, while ascending to the convent of St. Onofrio on a stormy April day in 1595. Seeing a cardinal's coach toiling up the steep Travertine hill, the good monks came to the door to meet it. From the carriage stepped forth the Odysseus of many wanderings and miseries, the singer of sweetest strains still vocal, and told the prior he had come to die among them.

Some three weeks later Tasso passed away, aged fifty-one, of which the twenty last years had added nothing to his fame. When he was thirty-one the *Gerusalemme* in its original form was finished, and the world was already ringing with the music of his *Aminta*, the influence of whose honeyed melodies was felt in opera and cantata for two successive generations. More than these Tasso had not to give to literature; but it is rather the succeeding years of derangement, exile, imprisonment, poverty and hope deferred that have endeared the man to us. Querulous and unreasonable as he must always appear, we love Tasso the better because he suffered through nearly a quarter of a century of slow decline, with misfortune an ever-present guest. Goethe, in his celebrated drama, *Torquato Tasso*, has from his own experience depicted vividly the struggle between the actual and the ideal, the alternate happiness and misery of a passionate poet in the artificial environment of a court. No experience on the part of a poet could have been larger. No observer could have been more

acute and accurate, nor could have employed his descriptive energy with greater vivacity and fidelity.

Aminta.

Tasso's beautiful pastoral drama or love-idyll, *Aminta*, is highly esteemed in Italy, and deserves to be better known in other languages. It was composed while he was still engaged on his great epic, whose splendor has thrown into the shade his minor works. *Aminta* belongs to the period of his happiness at the court of Ferrara, then the most brilliant in Italy. It was intended especially for the entertainment of the great ladies who had graciously received him and always befriended him. The duke's unmarried sisters, Leonora and Lucrezia d'Este, were his seniors by about ten years, had admitted the poet to their familiarity, and there is reason to believe that neither of them was indifferent to him personally. It is commonly reported that he had fallen in love with Leonora, and that the hopelessness of union with the object of his affection was the prime source of his subsequent insanity. While there is a plausibility in this report, it is more probable that his love was bestowed on Leonora Scandiano, a lady of the court.

Aminta was first performed in 1573 before the duke Alphonso and his court, to the intense delight of that gay and cultured assembly. The duke's sister, Lucrezia, who had been married to the prince of Urbino, sent for the author to read it to her at Pesaro, and in the following spring it was performed with renewed applause at her court. The sensitive poet was as much enchanted

with the rapturous favor of the audience at these exhibitions as they, in turn, were with the exquisite beauties and honeyed melodies of his pastoral drama. This skillful blending of poetry, music and dramatic art exactly suited the spirit of the age in which it appeared. It was at that very time that music was becoming the main art of Italy. Thenceforth the penetrating influence of this enchanting composition was felt in opera and cantata for more than two centuries, and throughout Europe.

The plot of this lyrical drama is simple. Aminta, we may note at the outset, is not a female name, but the Italian form of the Greek masculine Amyntas. This shepherd hero, if he may so be called, has spent his boyhood in constant companionship with the shepherdess Sylvia. But a sad change has come over their relation since his boyish friendship has ripened into ardent love. The crisis came when she was deluded into attempting to charm away the pain of a pretended bee's sting on his lip by kissing him. Thenceforth she has repelled his increasing and persistent attentions and declares herself a votary of Diana. She becomes a huntress and finds pleasure only in the chase of wild beasts. Such is the story told partly by Aminta to his friend Thyrsis, and partly by Sylvia to her confidant Daphne, who pleads Aminta's cause in vain. Sylvia even declares that she hates her former comrade, and Aminta, in despair at her avoidance of him, threatens that his misery must end in death, which alone can appease her. But Sylvia, before starting on a hunting expedition with her friend, goes to bathe in a favorite

pool. There the girls are surprised by a fierce satyr, who seizes and carries off Sylvia while Daphne escapes to give an alarm. Aminta hastens to the woods and finds Sylvia tightly bound to a tree, fastened by her hair and girdle and twigs. Though hesitating at first to approach, he partially releases her, when she, vexed at being discovered in such distress, bids him begone without thanking him. The dismayed Aminta speedily retires, and Sylvia, unfastening the twigs which still detained her, flees in the opposite direction. But in the next act a messenger brings word that Aminta, rushing to the brow of a precipice, has thrown himself headlong. Sylvia, overcome with horror at hearing of his death, begs to be led to the place, that she may atone for her fault. The lover's body is found at the foot of a cliff, and a shepherd who was standing near reports that the fall was broken by a tree and bushes. Sylvia flings herself upon the lifeless form and laments her past cruelty and hardness of heart. Aminta revives and, opening his eyes, finds himself clasped in her arms. It soon appears that, except for some scratches and bruises, he has escaped serious injury. "Happy is he who has given so great proof of his love and now tastes its sweets, to which grief and danger give a delightful relish." Such is the argument of this lyrical drama, which is divided into five acts, each closing with an ode sung by a chorus of shepherds.

Tasso is thought to have represented himself in the character of Thyrsis, and from his mouth we take his glowing, forceful and impressive description of his admission to court:

I, with all this fine foreknowledge, went
 To the great city; and, by Heaven's kind will,
 Came where they live so happily. The first sound
 I heard was a delightful harmony,
 Which issued forth, of voices loud and sweet;—
 Sirens, and swans, and nymphs, a heavenly noise
 Of heavenly things;—which gave me such delight,
 That, all admiring, and amazing, and joyed,
 I stopped a while quite motionless. There stood
 Within the entrance, as if keeping guard
 Of those fine things, one of a high-souled aspect,
 Stalwart withal, of whom I was in doubt
 Whether to think him better knight or leader.
 He, with a look at once benign and grave,
 In royal guise, invited me within;
 He, great and in esteem; me, lorn and lowly.
 Oh, the sensations and the sights which then
 Shower'd on me. Goddesses I saw, and nymphs
 Graceful and beautiful, and harpers fine
 As Linus or as Orpheus; and more deities,
 All without veil or cloud, bright as the virgin
 Aurora, when she glads immortal eyes,
 And sows her beams and dew-drops, silver and gold.

Jerusalem Delivered.

As one of the world's great epics, and one of the most dramatic of poems, Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*, deserves more than passing mention. When first published it was made the excuse for a dispute among the academies which, in the sixteenth century, overran all Italy, and were chiefly famous for word-splitting. At Ferrara the poem became almost an affair of state. Its publication in a very inaccurate form, in a pirated edition, during the author's imprisonment, was one of the poet's grievances; for he had all an artist's care

about the execution of his work. The pirated edition bore the title which Tasso had chosen, *Il Goffredo*, but this he changed for *Gerusalemme Liberata* in the first authorized edition of 1581. Under the influence of the fretful piety of his later years he made an ill-advised revision, to which he gave the name of *Gerusalemme Conquistata*. In this he rigidly erased much that gave charm to the poem of his early manhood.

As in the *Rinaldo*, so also in the *Jerusalem Delivered*, Tasso aimed at ennobling the Italian epic style by preserving strict unity of plot and heightening poetic diction. He chose Virgil for his model, took the first crusade for subject, and infused the fervor of religion into his conception of the hero, Godfrey. But his own natural bias was for romance. In spite of the poet's ingenuity and industry, the stately theme of his epic displayed less spontaneity of genius than the romantic episodes with which he adorned it. Godfrey is not even the real hero of the *Gerusalemme*. The fiery and passionate Rinaldo, the melancholy, impulsive Tancredi and the chivalrous Saracens with whom they clash in love and war, divide our interest and divert it from Godfrey. On Armida, beautiful witch, sent forth by the infernal senate to sow discord in the Christian camp, turns the action of the epic. She is converted to the true faith by her adoration for a crusading knight, and quits the scene with a phrase of the Virgin on her lips. Brave Clorinda, fighting in duel with her devoted lover, and receiving baptism from his hands at her death; Erminia, seeking refuge in a shepherd's hut—these lovely pagan women, so touching in their sorrows, so romantic in their adven-

tures, so tender in their emotions, rivet our attention, while we skip the battles, religious ceremonies, conclaves and stratagems of the campaign. The truth is that Tasso was at his best in the poetry of sentiment, and it is sentiment, not sentimentality, that gives value to what is immortal in the *Gerusalemme*.

The enduring popularity of the *Jerusalem Delivered* has been vouched for in Italy by stories which tell how it was sung by gondoliers and peasants even in the nineteenth century, while Ugo Foscolo relates that he has heard passages chanted by galley-slaves. But its acceptance among poets and men of letters, in the sixteenth century and afterward, is not a matter of legend. Milton and Spenser both admired Tasso, and did not hesitate to borrow from him, or at least to imitate him. The combat between the good and bad angels in the *Paradise Lost* has its counterpart in the ninth canto of the *Jerusalem Delivered*, where Michael is sent by God to drive the infidels into hell. Acrasia's bower of bliss and the final adventure of Sir Guyon, in the second book of the *Faërie Queen*, are modeled on, and in some passages taken directly from, the description of the garden of *Armida* and the rescue of *Rinaldo* in the fifteenth and sixteenth cantos of the *Jerusalem*.

The popularity of Tasso's epic with those of the Italians who would know nothing of Dante, and very little of Ariosto, and the admiration expressed for it by poets or men of letters, are both well justified, though for different reasons. The *Jerusalem Delivered* has a beauty of form which naturally delights people who have a real love of melody, while the matter is no less

acceptable to all who are attracted rather by the pretty and the sympathetic than by the great or brilliant. The allegory, which Tasso himself afterward expounded at length, is of the order which offends nobody, and, as one of his critics has observed, we can watch the fortunes of Tancred and Clorinda, of Rinaldo and Armida, of Godfrey and the crusaders, "as if we looked on that scene through an inverted telescope, whereby the whole was carried far away into the distance, the life-large figures compressed into brilliant miniatures, so clear, so real, yet tiny, elf-life and beautified as well as lessened, their colors being now closer and brighter, the shadows and trivial features no longer visible."

Godfrey's Battle with the Soldan.

Of the battle scenes, perhaps the most powerful is in the ninth canto, where is described the great conflict for the possession of Jerusalem between the forces of Godfrey and the Soldan:

The Soldan rushes on, the foremost he,
Upon the guards' unranged and startled pow'r
So swift that slower doth the storm-blast flee
From caverned mountains in tempestuous hour.
Torrent that hurls away the house and tree,
Thunder that batters down and burns the tow'r,
Earthquake that o'er the world a horror flings,
Poised with his fury are but trifling things.

His weapon never falls except to hit;
Nor hits it ever without wounding, too;
Nor wounds but that a soul away doth flit:
More would I say, but false would seem the true.

He sure must feign, or from all pain be quit,
Or else not feel the strokes which they renew,
Although his battered helm with bell-like sound
Rings out, and sparkles horribly around.

The Christians fight bravely, especially Latinus and his five sons "born where Tiber flows"—

But as a rock exposed to stormy blast,
Which, wave-struck, doth o'er sea its mass uprear,
Firm in itself endures the billows vast,
The winds, the bolts, the wrath of Heaven severe,
Thus doth the fiery Soldan here stand fast
With haughty front against the sword, the spear,
And cleaves the head of him who is aiming now
To smite his steed, between the cheek and brow.

Then Godfrey appears on the scene and restores the fight:

Godfrey, where'er he sees his people show
Their backs dismayed, runs thither and threats the base:
"What fear," he cries, "is this? whither then go?
Behold at least who 'tis that gives you chase.
A vile troop chases you which does not know
How to receive nor give wounds on the face:
And if they see you turned against them now,
Will dread the weapons even of your brow."

This said, he pricks his steed, and makes him wheel
To where he had seen the Soldan's murderous wrong:
And through the midst of blood, and dust, and steel,
And imminent risks, and deaths, he goes along,
With sword and thrust each path doth he unseal
However closed each rank, however strong,

And down on either side ne'er fails to strike
Horsemen and horses, arms and armed alike.

* * * * *

The Archangel to the Rescue.

But the fiend Aluto and the legions of hell had come
to the aid of the murderous Turks. It is time, there-
fore, for heaven to interpose in behalf of the Christians.

Meanwhile the King of Heaven from His grand seat
Bent down His eyes upon the battle's heat.

There sat He whence, both good and just, He sways
All worlds, and frames all by His word alone,
Above the low bounds of earth's narrow maze
At heights of sense and reason all unknown,
And shone with three lights blent into one blaze
Upon eternity's majestic throne.
Nature and Fate are at His feet submiss,
And Motion also, and what measures this,

And Place, and she who spoils and rolls from sight
Like vapor, or like dust, earth's every prize,
Gold, glory, empire, as above seems right,
Nor Goddess, ever heeds our human sighs.
Here so involves He Him in His own light
That e'en the worthiest veil their dazzled eyes:
Him numberless immortal spirits surround,
Equal unequally in their joy profound.

The heavenly palace echoes to the song
Attuned in grand consent by joyous quire.
He summons Michael, who in armor strong
Of lucid adamant flames forth like fire;
And says: "Perceiv'st thou not how Hell's bad throng
Against my faithful cherished flock conspire

In arms rebellious, and from lowest deep
To vex the world on soaring pinion sweep!

"Go; tell them, thou, no more henceforth to mell
With war, which warriors only should sustain;
Nor to disturb and poison with their spell
The kingdom of the quick and Heaven's domain.
Let them return to the deep glooms of Hell,
Their worthy dwelling, and to their just pain;
Torment themselves there and the souls below.
So I command, and I have fixed it so."

He ceased. The leader of the winged host
Bowed reverent down at the Almighty's feet.
Then for the flight his golden vans he tossed
Fleet so that thought itself is not so fleet.
The spheres of fire and light are quickly crossed
Where blest ones have their fixed and glorious seat.
Then the pure crystal, then the starry sphere
Which rolls with an inverted course, is near.

* * * * *

Arrived where the impious troop of Hell prepare
To make still more the Pagan fury rise;
Poised on the vigor of his wings in the air,
He stops and shakes his spear, and to them cries:
"Well must ye know with what horrific glare
The thunder of the world's Creator flies,
O ye who, 'mid contempt and bitterest ill
Of wretchedness extreme, are haughty still.

" 'Tis fixed in Heaven that Sion shall unchain
Her gates, her walls bow to the Cross's might.
Why war then upon Fate? and the disdain
Of the Celestial Court why thus invite?
Hence, ye accursed, to your own domain,
Domain of torment and of death outright,
And in that region, doomed to be your cell,
Wage all your wars, and all your triumphs tell,

"Be cruel there; there on the guilty lay
 Your weight of spite, and let your power appear,
 'Mid endless cries, and gnashing teeth, and bray
 Of steel, and shaken chains that rend the ear."
 He spake, and whom he saw reluctant stay,
 Them pushed and smote he with his fatal spear.
 They from the lovely realms of light were driven,
 And groaning left the golden stars of Heaven:

And downward tow'rd the abyss their wings they fanned
 To exasperate in the damned their wonted woe.
 There crosses not the sea a flight so grand
 Of birds in search of suns with warmer glow;
 Nor Autumn e'er sees fall upon the land
 So many dry leaves when the chill winds blow.
 Relieved from these, the world soon puts away
 Its gloomy aspect, and again is gay.

The Fight Goes On.

But the combat is not over yet; for the infidels, with
 Soldan still at their head, withstand the onslaught of the
 Franks—

A thousand veteran Turks were here enrolled,
 All covered with the mail, and helm, and shield;
 Untamed of limb in toil, or heat, or cold,
 Of ardent spirit, skillful in the field;
 And these had been the soldiers from of old
 Of Solyman; and when he was concealed
 In Arab deserts, in reverse still true,
 Had followed him his hapless wanderings through.

These drawn together, ceased not to make head
 Against the Franks' attacks however keen.
 On these did Godfrey rush, and smite the dread
 Corcutes' face, and on the flank Rostene.

From Selim's shoulders he unloosed the head,
Cut off the right and left arm of Rossene:
Nor these alone, but more he wounded still
In other modes, and many did he kill.

While thus he smote the Saracens, and drew
Upon himself in turn full many a scar,
And in no part did that Barbarian crew
Abate in hope, or quail to Fortune's star;
Behold now near a cloud of dust anew,
Which holds within its bosom bolts of war:
Lo! unforeseen issues a flash of arms
Which fills the Pagan camp with deep alarms.

There are full fifty warriors who unfold
On silver pure the conquering purple cross.
Nor could I with a hundred mouths have told,
A hundred tongues, and iron lungs and voice,
What numbers did that squadron fiercely bold
Beat down in its fierce charge with death or loss.
Falls the weak Arab; and the Turk, unknown
To yield, resisting, fighting, is o'erthrown.

What earthly force can do the Soldan brave
Meanwhile has done, and more is now denied.
He is all blood and sweat, and pantings grave
And frequent hurt his breast and shake his side.
His languid arm no more the shield can wave;
Slowly his sword moves, and in wheels less wide;
It bruises, and not cuts, and grown obtuse,
The weapon now has lost a weapon's use.

Aware of this, he seemed in the act to stand
Of one who weighed two schemes; and to debate
If he should perish, and with his own hand
Rob others of the fame from deed so great;
Or else, surviving his defeated band,
Prolong his life to a more distant date,

"Let Fate then win," he said at last, "and be
My flight the trophy of its victory."

The Knight's Voyage to Elysium.

We turn to peaceful scenes, where the two knights,
Ubaldo and Charles, instructed by a sage, seek Rinaldo,
held enchained by Armida's magic arts, after being
instructed how to overcome them. Many and strange
are their adventures before they arrive at Armida's
enchanted gardens.

Already the first ray, serene and fair,
Had called to toil each creature of the field,
When the sage coming to the knightly pair
Brought them the golden rod, the chart, and shield.
"For the grand voyage," he exclaimed, "prepare,
Ere day which dawns e'en now be more revealed;
Lo, here is that for which I gave my plight,
And which will overcome all magic sleight."

Already had they risen, already braced
Their trusty armor on the vigorous limb:
Hence along paths uncheered by day with haste
They went with that old man: and led by him,
Retrod the self-same track o'er which they paced
At their first coming from the water's rim.
But when they had attained his river's bed,
"I bid you adieu; go prosper, friends!" he said.

The stream received them where it deeply sank,
And gently thrusting, made them upward glide,
As it is wont to raise light bough or plank
Which force has pushed far down into its tide:
It left them then upon the grassy bank.
Hence they beheld the already promised guide:
They marked a pinnacle; and the fatal maid
Who should escort them at the rudder stayed.

"Enter," she said, "ye blest, this bark of mine
With which secure I cross the ocean road,
To which all breezes blow with favoring sign,
All storms are calm, and light is every load.
To serve and guide you has my Lord divine
Sped me with haste; to Him this grace is owed."
Thus spoke the maid; then nearer to the bank
She made the curving pine present its flank.

Soon as it has received the noble pair
She thrusts the shore, and lets the cable slack;
And having loosed the sail to the light air,
She seats her at the helm and rules the track.
The torrent is so swollen that it would bear
The largest burdens now upon its back:
But this one is so slight that stream less great
From recent moisture would uphold its weight.

The vessel takes them past the Egyptian camp, and
skirting the coast of Africa, glides between the Pillars
of Hercules, as then were called the straits of Gibraltar,
and turns toward the south, where presently they behold
the famous Peak of Teneriffe.

They looked afar, and saw a mountain shroud
Its lofty forehead in a wreath of cloud.

And they perceived it, as they drew more nigh,
And it had wholly lost its cloudy vest,
Like a sharp pyramid athwart the sky,
Large in the mist and fine toward the crest;
And it appeared to send up smoke on high,
Like the one upon Enceladus his breast;
Whose nature 'tis to smoke while day is bright,
And then illume the skies with flames at night.

Lo! other isles together, and they came
To other slopes at last, less steep and tall;

RINALDO AND ARMIDA
After an original painting by E. Zier

will not get any thing by it, and so she will not do it.

I have seen the enchantress, used her charms
To draw Rinaldo from their vows and duties.
Rinaldo, who had fallen a victim to her, finally con-
fessed to the true faith, and she left the
sacred place, and went to follow him, with
the praise of the Virgin on her lips.

JERUSALEM DELIVERED.—TASSO.



These were the Happy Islands, by which name
The olden ages had been wont to call
A group so favored by the skies (thus fame
Made men believe) that here the lands would all
Bring forth spontaneous, and without the plow,
And vines untilled yield sweeter fruits than now.

Here olive blossoms did not vainly teem,
Here honey dropped out from the hollowed ash;
And down from every mountain hied the stream
With sparkling water and with murmuring plash:
And breeze and dew so tempered the sunbeam
That nothing here e'er felt its fervent lash;
Here were the Elysian Fields; and here repose
The famous mansions where blessed souls repose.

The knights would debark on one of these islands, but
the maiden has no power to grant their request; for

These are the Isles of Fortune at our side.
Nor may ye bring o'er ocean's deep abyss
To your own world true knowledge home from this.

Rinaldo in Armida's Garden.

Soon they come to a group of islands to the eastward,
and into a port in one of them the sailor-maid guides
her barque, and directs the knights how to find the spot
they are seeking. After climbing a steep hill, they
come to the banks of a stream, and journey inland to
a veritable paradise, filled with song-birds, where

All creatures felt them borne by love along.

Amid the melodies which so softly waken,
And 'mid such flattering and alluring wiles,

That pair speed on; and rigid and unshaken
Steel them against each pleasure that beguiles.
When lo! their glance, nor can it be mistaken,
Sent onward pierces through the leafy aisles,
And sees the lover and the maid adored,
Him on her bosom laid, her on the sward.

Her bosom through the drawn veil meets the view,
And in the warm breeze her loose hair is roving:
She languishes with joy, and her cheek's hue
Shows livelier 'neath drops of heat unmoving.
As ray through wave, a sparkling smile shines through
Her liquid eyes now tremulous and loving.
O'er him she hangs; his head assumes a place
On her soft breast with face upturned to face.

And while his hungry looks greedily reap
From her their food, he wastes himself in sighs.
She stoops and sucks now from his lips a heap
Of kisses, and now sips them from his eyes:
And at that point he heaves a sigh so deep
That he imagines: "Now my spirit flies
And travels o'er to her!" The warrior pair
Still hidden, watch those amorous actions there.

Down from her lover's side, O strange attire!
There hung a crystal furbished all and bright.
He rose and held it forward for her nigher,
The chosen minister of Cupid's rite.
Her laughing eyes, and his lit up with fire
See but one object present to the sight:
She makes the glass her mirror: he supplies
A mirror to himself in her fair eyes.

"Ah! since thou scornest me, thou mayest there
At least behold how fair is thine own face,
For thus thy glance, which is not pleased elsewhere,
Turned tow'rd itself may joy at its own grace.

No mirror can portray a form so fair,
Nor in small glass a Paradise find space.
Thy mirror should be Heaven, whose orbs of light
Alone reflect to thee thy charms aright."

Armida smiled at this, but still pursued
Her self-delight and pretty toils of old.
When she had woven her hairs, and had subdued
With graceful discipline their errors bold,
She curled the smaller locks and 'mid them strewed
Rich flowers which seemed enamel upon gold;
And o'er her bosom's native lilies pale
Flung foreign roses, and composed her veil.

Nor beauteous thus the peacock when his store
Of bright-eyed plumes in conscious pomp is dight:
Nor Iris when she gilds and purples o'er
Her curved and dewy bosom to the light.
But fairer than aught else the cest she wore,
Which she kept ever round her, e'en by night.
Body to bodiless things did she affix;
And mixed to make it what none else may mix.

Tender disdains, rebukes mild and discreet,
Endearing arts, and concord full of bliss,
Smiles, little words, and drops of sorrow sweet,
And broken sighs, and many a gentle kiss:
All these she fused, and tempered them with heat
Of sluggish torches which were kept remiss;
And formed of them that admirable cest
Which now around her lovely side was pressed.

Her wooing done at last, she bids adieu
To the fond youth, kisses him and departs.
Each day she is wont to go forth and review
Her own affairs, and search her magic charts.
He stays; for never may he thence pursue
His path, or moment spend in other parts,

And, save when occupied with her, he roves
A lonely lover 'mong the beasts and groves.

Rinaldo Disenchanted.

Meanwhile Ubald comes forth from his hiding-place
and turns full on the sight of Rinaldo the "adamantine
shield," with its magic power.

He turns his glance to the bright shield thus bare,
Which shows him what he is; and with what pride
Of delicacy adorned, his dress and hair
Breathe wanton odors that would grace a bride:
He sees his sword, yes, e'en his sword, made fair
By too much feminine luxury at his side:
An useless ornament thus decked it seems,
Not like a weapon that for battle gleams.

As one by deep and heavy sleep oppressed
After long dream regains his wonted lore,
So by that glance his senses were redressed:
But he can gaze upon himself no more.
Down falls his glance, and, timid and depressed,
Shame keeps it fixed upon the grassy floor.
He'd plunge in ocean, into fire would creep,
To hide himself, aye, seek the central deep.

Then Ubald seized the moment to exclaim:
"In arms all Asia and all Europe stand;
Whoever adores Christ, and longs for fame,
Now toils in warfare in the Syrian land.
Thou only, son of Bertold, idly tame
Art locked out from the world on this small strand.
Thou only art not moved by the grand whirl
Of war, egregious champion of a girl.

'What sleep, what lethargy so long benights
Thy valor? what vile quest does it pursue?

Up! thee the camp, thee Godfrey now invites;
Fortune expects thy sword, and victory too.
Come, fatal warrior, end the task which cites
Its former champion, and let that ill crew,
Whom thou hast shaken erst, be lowly laid,
Struck down by thy inevitable blade."

He ceased; the noble youth, confused a space,
And without voice or gesture, made a pause,
But when shame yielded up to scorn its place,
Scorn the fierce champion here of reason's cause,
And following up the redness of his face
A new fire came which burnt with fiercer jaws;
He tore those empty ornaments away,
Those pomps unworthy, slavery's base array;

And hastened, as one even now too late,
Forth from that tortuous labyrinthine chain.
Meanwhile Armida at the regal gate
Marked on the ground its fiery guardian slain.
She guessed at once, and soon she knew her fate,
That her beloved had broken from the rein;
And sees him turn his back, ah! cruel sight!
On that delightful home in hasty flight.

But we cannot further follow this magnificent epic, which, though less known than the *Iliad*, *Æneid*, or *Paradise Lost*, is doubtless familiar to the cultured reader.

Between Tasso or Bruno and any of their contemporaries the difference is very great. There was no lack of interest in literary matters, and there was no want of criticism of a certain kind. The long controversy over the *Jerusalem*, in which Tasso allowed himself to be involved, if valuable for nothing else, was at least a proof that the Italians read poetry, and knew how to

talk about it; but what they could not do at this period was to produce anything original and valuable. The once famous *Pastor Fido* of Guarini is an example of what may happen to a literature when its writers have become highly cultivated in all that pertains to language but have nothing to say—or if they have, are cowed into insignificance by the fear of compromising themselves. Guarini was a man of character, a little querulous and afflicted by a vanity which caused him to be forever comparing himself to Tasso, and complaining of his contemporary's greater fame; but he was by no means without parts or knowledge. Yet his *Pastor Fido* was a mere echo of the *Aminta*. Guarini's play, if such it can be called, was first acted at Turin in 1585, and from it came the Italian literary opera of later times. The verse is flowing, with touches of a somewhat sensual lusciousness, but it is nerveless and imitative.

II.

The Lyrical Drama.

As compared with the era of the Renaissance, the seventeenth century was for Italy a period of literary stagnation, relieved only by the endeavor to conceal decay in fantastic extravagance, by the commencement of a reaction near the close of the cycle, and by occasional progress in isolated directions, which in a more favored era would have been fruitful of important results. The false taste which disfigures this epoch was not peculiar to Italy; but while in other countries it appears as a symptom of exuberant life, in Italy it dominates literature. What elsewhere was a mere disorder of youth, was in Italy premature old age. For this decadence no other cause can be assigned than the withering away of national life under the blight of civil and ecclesiastical tyranny.

Causes of Decadence.

Although the reigns of Charles V and Philip II appear among the most brilliant in history, this was also a period when chains were forged to subdue the in-

telleet of mankind, and when genius, arrested in its course, was compelled to retrace its steps. These monarchs, who reaped all the advantage of the munificent labors of their predecessors, failed to scatter, in their turn, the seeds of cultivation; and every province subjected to their dominion was doomed alike to intellectual sterility. It is almost impossible to convey an idea of the suspicious, yet lethargic, nature of the Spanish government under the three Philips, II, III and IV, over nearly one-half of Italy, embracing Milan, Naples, Sicily, and Sardinia, extending likewise, with scarcely less authority, over the territories of the pope, and over the dukedoms of Italy, which had occasion to solicit its protection. Enormous duties, unequally and absurdly exacted, destroyed commerce, and exhausted and depopulated the country; while governors enriched themselves by cruel and overwhelming extortions, which excited an universal feeling of hatred and contempt for the blind infatuation and injustice of such a system. The course of interminable wars, in which the court of Madrid persisted during the whole period that the house of Austria wielded the sceptre of Spain, had drained the finest provinces of their wealth and population, and left them open to the depredations of the Turks, to the invasion of the French, to the masked wars of the Piedmontese, and to the residence of German and Spanish troops, even more to be dreaded than the enemy.

All free inquiry was considered in the light of an attack upon the government; while the liberty of the press was rigidly prohibited, as well as the least dis-

cussion relating to public affairs. Nor were such coercive measures confined to the circulation of obnoxious writings. All persons accused of having prohibited books in their possession were subjected to the severest civil and religious penalties. In order to render this oppressive system still more effectual, and to extend its sway over the mind, the Inquisition was resorted to, as a final means of perpetuating the despotism already established. Not that this tribunal was instituted with a view to the interests of religion, or even to the interests of the clergy. The policy pursued by the court of Madrid was to introduce the doctrines of the council into other states, in order to enfeeble and distract them, and while setting no bounds to its authority, it would never consent to recognize them. Hence the perpetual inconsistency we everywhere observe between its professions and its conduct; and thus persecution was rendered still more intolerable, because its objects were misunderstood and its limits could never be foreseen. Abuses only seemed to be respected; civil liberty was openly invaded; and the popular rights in every point betrayed. Men suspected of entertaining liberal views, no less than of overt actions, were subjected to cruel and atrocious punishments, inflicted rather for torture and revenge than in the course of justice and the laws, which were, indeed, no longer administered. Churches and monasteries served as a safe asylum for guilt; while the viceroys, governors of the cities, and other agents of the government, took hired bandits into their service, remunerating deeds of outrage committed by their

authority with spoil and impunity. Even convents scrupled not to make use of the same weapons; and in the conspiracy of the monk Campanella, the people witnessed, not without astonishment, the priests of Calabria, arming with their own hands many thousands of banditti, who encamped in military order before the towns, so that it required a large escort to pass between them.

Such a state of anarchy, together with the universal hatred borne by the Italians toward the Spaniards, led to repeated efforts to free themselves from their yoke. The insurrections at Naples and Messina, in 1647-8, rescued nearly the whole of the two Sicilies from the sway of Spain; nor were they again recovered, until recourse was had to treachery where open force had failed. The Milanese, exposed to the continual passage of troops destined for the wars in France and Germany, did not dare openly to revolt; but the public discontent, and the fixed determination of the people to shake off the ignominious yoke, were the foundations of the power of the house of Savoy, which secretly aggrandized itself at the expense of the Austrian Government.

Origin of the Opera.

The rise of the opera may, perhaps, be considered as the only literary event of the seventeenth century of which Italy can justly boast, and this is so intimately associated with the drama proper that a brief account of its earlier development will be here in place. With the decline of literature, the triumph of the various

arts of design had also ceased. Michael Angelo had been the contemporary of Ariosto; his pupils and successors flourished in the time of Tasso; and thenceforward the flashes of true genius no longer animated the canvas or the poet's page. The astonishing progress of musical science, however, succeeded to that of the sister arts, as if the intellectual energies of man sought development in the only career left open to them; and those who felt within themselves the impulse of a creative faculty, had recourse, as a last resort, to harmony, in which they might give full and uncontrolled expression to their genius, without encountering the wrath of the Inquisition. Nor were the Italians, from their organization, less susceptible to the charms of music than of poetry and painting. A fine natural taste led them at once to appreciate, with little effort or reflection, whatever was most pure and beautiful of its kind. The increasing progress and importance of music, at a time when poetry was on the decline, gave the former such a superiority that poetry became a mere accessory and ornament to it, and was rendered subservient to the merest trifles, and to all the variations and fashions of the day; while the sister art approached nearer and nearer to perfection, in proportion to its established importance, and to the influence which it exerted over the other arts.

In imitation of the Greeks, the chorus had been introduced into Italian tragedy, and it was invariably sung. Pastoral dramas were likewise interspersed with songs and accompanied with instruments. But music had been only accessory in such compositions,

intended to give zest and perfection to the entertainment, but not to constitute its essence. The first occasion on which this order was reversed was in the year 1594, when Ottavio Rinuccini, a Florentine poet, with little originality, but with a fine musical ear, united his efforts with those of three musicians—Peri, Corsi and Caccini. Together they produced a mythological drama, in which they intended to reveal the united excellence of their productions* in the most splendid dress. Rinuccini appeared to care less for his reputation as a poet than for displaying the art of his associates to the greatest advantage. He neglected nothing which might increase the attraction in the way of decorations and machinery, and surprise or captivate the senses of the audience. Men of letters had, at least, preserved the memory of the musical declamation of the Greeks, but Peri or Caccini imagined he had discovered that this consisted in the recitative, which was blended so intimately with the poetry that there was nothing to be merely spoken throughout the whole of the opera. Thus poetry, written only with a view to being sung, very soon assumed a different character; and the development of scenes, already too extended, was no longer admissible. The poet's object was to produce effect, and to this he readily sacrificed the conduct of the piece, hastening or retarding the course of events as he thought best adapted to musical exhibition, rather than to the natural expression of the passions.

Rinuccini's first attempt consisted of little more than one of Ovid's metamorphoses thrown into dialogue.

Apollo is exhibited in the act of wounding the serpent Python, while the nymphs and shepherds are seen in flight. Scornful in his victory, he ventures to taunt the god of love, who takes his usual revenge. Smitten with Daphne's beauty, Apollo pursues her; she flies, and a shepherd soon after appears, who tells the story of her metamorphosis. From these scant materials was evolved the entire operetta, with its four choruses, divided into as many short acts, and barely containing altogether 450 verses. The choruses are given in very easy couplets, which seem to be admirably adapted for music. The remaining portion was probably altogether recitative, as we find no detached airs, duets or pieces by several voices. Such was the lowly origin of what Voltaire calls "that beautiful monster, the opera," which threatened for a time to supersede the regular drama.

The *Euridice* of Rinuccini followed his *Daphne*, and was produced, likewise, in unison with the same musicians. It was first represented in 1600, on the occasion of the nuptials of Mary de' Medici and Henry IV of France. Shortly afterward appeared his *Ariana*, the reception of which was no less brilliant. The success of the opera was thus assured, and soon every court eagerly followed the example held out by Florence. Improvements followed rapidly. More lively action was given to the dramatic portions and greater variety to the music, in which the airs were agreeably blended with the recitative. Duets and other harmonized pieces were also added; and, later, Apostolo Zeno carried it to the highest development attained,

until the spirit of Metastasio breathed a soul of fire into the ingenious creations of others.

Apostolo Zeno.

Apostolo Zeno was born of a Venetian family in 1669. Passionately devoted to the study of history, he was the first to introduce historical pieces into the scenes of the opera, instead of confining himself, as others had done, within the limits of mythology. The reputation of French tragedy had already begun to extend throughout Europe; and he freely availed himself of its best productions, using them as his models. Of sixty operas which he brought before the public, the most complete and successful were undoubtedly those in which he had imitated the French classics. Thus, the whole of the plot, the incidents and the characters of his *Iphigenia* are borrowed from Racine, and used in such way as he thought best adapted to the opera. The language of the passions is throughout imbued with that solemn harmony with which music so well accords, without, however, arriving at the vigor and brevity of tragedy. The historical pieces which he produced are somewhat of a burlesque on history; for in this direction his genius did not incline. While constantly dwelling on the passion of love, he is deficient in the harmony, delicacy and ardor which, in Metastasio, transport us out of ourselves. Zeno, likewise, composed several comic operas, which appeared about the same time as those of a more serious kind. They were modeled upon the extemporized

comedies already well known, in which harlequins, columbines and other masks of the Italian theatre appear as the principal personages. But Zeno did not exhibit much talent in the lighter vein of opera, and this very amusing branch of popular entertainment, to which Italy is indebted for much of her most attractive music, has never been illustrated by any superior ability.

Zeno was invited to Vienna by the Emperor Charles VI, where he was invested with the two very opposite employments of imperial historiographer and poet laureate to the court opera. He lived to be eighty-one, and in his old age had the mortification of finding his reputation eclipsed by Metastasio.

Metastasio.

Born at Rome, on the third day of January, 1698, Metastasio was apprenticed to the trade of a goldsmith, but was educated by a friend of the family, the jurist Gravina, who, appreciating his fine talents, took him into his own household, changing his name from Trapassi to the Greek translation of the same word, Metastasio, as more refined. Gravina also took care to have him instructed in every branch of knowledge likely to facilitate his progress in poetic art, whereby his powers were so thoroughly cultivated that he was enabled to express the finest traits of sentiment and passion with equal grace and facility. But Metastasio especially devoted himself to the style of composition by which he attained celebrity. At the early age of fourteen he

wrote a tragedy, entitled *Justin*, which, though in truth a very indifferent production, does honor to one so young. Thenceforth his attention was turned entirely to opera, and even his tragedy was itself almost in the nature of an opera. The flow of the verse is extremely musical, and airs are introduced into his chorus in the same manner as those inserted, at a later period, in his more finished productions. Gravina afterward accompanied his pupil to Crotona, his native place, that he might further prosecute his studies. Soon after his return to Rome he died, leaving Metastasio a property which made him independent.

For a century and a half Italy had been unable to boast of her literary superiority, but in Metastasio nature seemed to have made ample amends, for none of her writers ever more completely united all the qualities that constitute a poet—vivacity of imagination and refinement of feeling, combined with every charm of versification and expression. Nor shall we easily find one who, by the mere force of his style, was entitled to be considered a more graceful painter or a more delightful musician. Metastasio, however, made no pretensions to the highest order of genius. He did not aim at those lofty and vigorous creations which inspire us by their sublimity. He wished only to be the poet of the opera, and in this he succeeded, confining himself to the path which he had marked out, and in that path surpassing the most distinguished writers of Italy, if not of Europe. He very correctly appreciated the peculiar character of the theatre to which he devoted his talents, and in a species of com-

position which had never conferred much reputation on any other author, has produced, perhaps, the most national form of poetry that Italy can boast, certainly the one most deeply impressed upon the memory and feelings of the people.

Metastasio composed no less than eighteen hundred pieces, including twenty-eight grand operas, besides many of a shorter kind, a number of ballets and celebrations of festivals—a species of dialogue intermixed with musical airs and recitative, very frequently enlivened by dramatic action. He borrowed his subjects almost indiscriminately from mythology or history, and brought upon the stage most of the different peoples and different countries belonging to the ancient world. He is also indebted to Ariosto for one of his more romantic and chivalric pieces, entitled *Ruggiero*, which must be referred to the middle ages. It is to this very enlarged view of different countries, ages and manners that Metastasio owes all those ornamental features introduced into his lyric scenes, the great variety of his decorations and costumes and even that richness of local imagery in which his poetry abounds. But he has been less successful in delineation of character, interests and passions, for, carried away by his exquisite musical taste, he sacrificed the highest objects of his art to the gratification of this feeling. Music, however well adapted to give expression to the passions, cannot serve to mark different situations, manners and characters, and he who should attempt to use it for such purposes would simply make it appear ridiculous. We should, for instance, feel disgusted at hearing barbarism cele-

brated in wild and savage strains; or, if in singing of love, it were attempted also to convey an idea of the pride of the Romans or the despotism of the Orientals.

By many of the Italians Metastasio has been ranked as a tragedian, but to this he is not entitled, nor ought he to be held out as a model in any species of composition but that of the opera. His poetry must not be divested for a moment of its musical attractions, nor should it be put into the mouths of tragic actors, as too often has been and is the case in Italy. We feel that the object of real tragedy is to call forth the most powerful emotions by pictures of human fate and wretchedness, and we know that feelings cannot be thus deep and powerful which are not essentially founded on nature and truth. The tragic poet transports us at once into the very place he has chosen, to make us the witness of some terrific action; and here we expect to find places, manners, prejudices and passions, everything in union together and as a consistent whole. We must be made to breathe, as it were, the very atmosphere, glowing with the words and spirit of the heroes, contending with their destiny around us. This was the triumph of the Greek theatre, and this the English and the Germans have also succeeded in effecting. The failure of the French tragedians has been generally attributed to their giving to all the great personages of antiquity the language and sentiments of their own countrymen, and nowhere is this more apparent than in the works of such acknowledged masters as Corneille and Racine. Thus the Horace and Cinna of the former and the Andromaque and Phedre of the latter speak and

move in a French atmosphere, and so with Voltaire, whose Brutus and Cæsar are still more thoroughly Gallicized.

Hypsipyle.

A correct idea of the drama of Metastasio can best be obtained from an analysis of one of his most finished pieces, and for this purpose may be selected the *Hypsipyle*, which, in its varieties of incident and character, will serve to explain the fabric of Italian opera. The play is, perhaps, one of the most poetical of his works; it combines many scenes of romantic interest, and as the danger to which the leading characters are exposed is very well maintained, it keeps alive the attention of the spectators. The versification is likewise superior, and the dialogue, by turns, touching, eloquent and impassioned. To enjoy it as we ought we must create for ourselves an illusion, which may serve to disguise the many improbabilities of facts and character; and, abandoning ourselves to its impulses, we must wander through an ideal world, where everything is new and where even moral laws take their source in other principles.

The scene is placed in Lemnos and the theatre represents the temple of Bacchus, whose rites are about to be celebrated. Hypsipyle appears with her confidant Rhodope, both in the character of Bacchantes. A terrible oath, binding her to a frightful conspiracy of the Lemnian women, has just passed her lips. It is to massacre the whole Lemnian army on its return from a long expedition into Thrace. The princess commands Rho-

dope to hasten toward the shore to prevent, if possible, her father, King Thoas, from disembarking; but it is too late, and Eurynome, one of the most desperate of the Bacchantes, who originated the project of assassinating all their brothers and husbands, announces his arrival. She stirs up the fury of the Bacchantes by exciting their jealousy, and gives final orders for the massacre, which is to be executed during the night. Hypsipyle encourages it, and seems by her language more ferocious than Eurynome herself. The speech of Eurynome has the twofold merit of expressing the eloquent feeling of the moment, and of explaining to the spectator the motives and mysteries of this strange conspiracy in such a manner as to give them at least an air of probability.

Most noble princess,
And you, brave comrades of our enterprise,
Lo! from the Thracian shores once more returning,
The faithless Lemnians claim their native soil.
But, be it ours to visit their offenses
With vengeance due. True, they return, but how?
Have not three summer suns
Witness'd our harvest toils
Neglected and unaided? Now they come
To give the offspring of their stolen embraces
Into your laps; while each barbarian mistress,
Wild as the savage beast, whose milk she drew,
With painted visage mocks your slighted charms.
Revenge, revenge, our wrongs!
We have vow'd it, and our vow must be fulfill'd.
Fortune looks smiling on,
And favoring night her curtain lends
To shield our enterprise. While the glad god,
Whose noisy rites we celebrate,
With joyous songs shall drown their feeble cries.

Let fathers, sons, and brothers,
And falsest consorts, in one fate be buried.
For us, be ours the glory or the blame;
A proud example to the ingrate race
Of woman's wrath, for violated faith.

Thoas arrives with his Lemnians, but Hypsipyle ventures not to return his caresses. Full of grief, she beholds him surrounded by his soldiers; a word from his daughter's mouth would save him and his valiant companions from an ignominious death, by an open combat with the women, the result of which could not be doubtful. There is, moreover, little to excuse the indignation of the Lemnian women. The character of Thoas has all the qualities of manly prudence, kindness and love. The language found for him by the poet is remarkable for the paternal affection it displays; but a different character would have thrown a greater air of probability over the conspiracy of which he is the victim.

Thoas.—Long loved, and loved in vain,
Come to a father's arms, my child, my daughter,
I cannot tell how sad and wearily
The weight of my long years has on me press'd,
Since thus I fondly held you to my breast.
Now you again are near me; now I feel
The burden of my years sit light and easy
Upon an old man's head.

Hypsipyle.—(Aside.) My heart will break.

Tho.—But why so sad and silent,
My little girl? and why so strangely cold—
A father just restored?

Hyp.—Alas! you know not,
My lord. (Aside.) Ye gods, what torture!

Tho.—Is it my return

That grieves you thus?

Hyp.—Would you could read my heart!

Tho.—Nay, tell me all!

Hyp.—Ye gods!

Tho.—What is't that moves you? Speak!

Can th' hymeneal rites, which the young prince

Hastens from Thessaly to celebrate,

Displease my daughter?

Hyp.—No, sire; from the moment

I saw him first, I loved him.

Tho.—Can it be

You fear to lose the power my absence gave you?

Fear not. No longer sovereign prince or king

Am I. Still govern at your pleasure here,

Reward, and punish.—No desire have I,

But here to live, and in your arms to die.

In the meanwhile Thoas and the Lemnians retire to rest and Hypsipyle repeats her promise to assassinate her father. Eurynome now unfolds the cause of her desperate attempt. Her object is to avenge her son Learchus, who, having made an attempt to carry off Hypsipyle, had been banished by Thoas and was believed to have died in exile. Eurynome next gives orders for beginning the massacre, but as she disappears, Learchus enters upon the scene, where he meets Rhodope, who had formerly bestowed her affections upon him. She eagerly beseeches him to fly from a place where every man is doomed to destruction; but Learchus will not believe her. As the captain of a band of pirates, he has entered Lemnos for the purpose of preventing the nuptials of Jason, prince of Thessaly,

who is every moment expected to lead Hypsipyle to the altar. Learchus introduces himself into the palace gardens whither Hypsipyle soon afterward conducts her father, conceals him in a thicket and then retires. Their conversation is overheard by Learchus, who finds that Rhodope had not deceived him. He now seeks to draw away Thoas by a stratagem, and to take his place, with the view of carrying off Hypsipyle when she returns to seek her father. In fact, he addresses himself to Thoas, entreating him for his daughter's sake, to conceal himself elsewhere, assuring him that his retreat is already discovered; and after Thoas has withdrawn he enters the thicket in his stead.

The scene is changed. Eurynome announces to her countrywomen, who are assembled in the temple of Vengeance, that an armed man has been observed in the precincts of the palace; "but the Lemnian heroines," she continues, "have surrounded him, and, I doubt not, will soon prove victorious." It is Jason; and the next moment he appears, sword in hand, pursuing the "heroines" whom he has completely put to rout. He is astonished to find Eurynome and Hypsipyle reorganizing these Amazonian bands; he nevertheless accosts his betrothed in the most affecting and impassioned language, and is received with no less tenderness on her part. But his surprise is changed into horror when he hears of the slaughter which has just taken place of all the Lemnians, and of the assassination of the king by the hands of his intended bride. Hypsipyle herself makes a confession which, in the eyes of her lover, overwhelms her with disgrace. She had even taken the

precaution to place a disfigured corpse upon the couch of Thoas in order to deceive the conspirators. Jason hastens from this scene of blood disgusted at the unnatural wickedness of the bride whom he had flown to embrace.

The second act opens with the appearance of Eurynome during the night in the palace gardens, where Hypsipyle had concealed her father.

Eurynome.—Alas! whichever way I turn,
Some fatal object meets my eyes,
Kindling again my passions into madness,
'Midst these deep solitudes
I strive to lose the dread remorse,
Which still, where'er I fly, intrudes.
Tell me, ye awful scenes!
The spirit of my boy no longer wanders
Sad, unavenged, on the Lethean strand;
That now his mournful shade may pass the wave,
And taste the rest his mother's vengeance gave.

The son, to whom she here appeals, is at her side in the same retreat; but this piratical chief is, in truth, more cowardly than a woman. He shows himself with the utmost fear and retreats again at the least noise. His voice increases the anguish of Eurynome, who recognizes that of her son. Hypsipyle now arrives to withdraw her father from the place of his retreat, and she informs Learchus, whom she mistakes for Thoas, of the preparations she had made for flight. Eurynome hearing her intentions hastens to summon the Bacchantes, while Learchus, alarmed at the sudden flash of lights, makes his escape before he can be dis-

covered. Eurynome gives orders for the grove to be surrounded by the Bacchantes and for the retreats on all sides to be explored and set on fire, when, just at the moment she expects to stab Thoas, Learchus is brought forward and falls at her feet. This incident possesses a theatrical effect which would be striking had Metastasio employed it less frequently. The Bacchantes are supposed to insist upon the king's death, while Rhodope, still in love with Learchus, comes forward, under pretense of hastening his punishment, with the intention of saving his life. She contrives to lead Eurynome away, and orders her companions to make preparations for the public sacrifice, remaining unaccompanied to keep guard over Learchus. As soon as the women have departed she restores him to liberty. It may be here remarked that if the Lemnian women were to be thus easily imposed upon, Hypsipyle surely need not have invented so many artifices.

The scene again changes, and Jason is seen at sunrise on the seashore, at a distance from his slumbering companions. After a monologue, in which he reproaches Hypsipyle for her perfidy and cruelty, he falls asleep upon the ground, wearied with long watching. Learchus here approaches him, and beholds his rival at his feet unarmed and alone. He draws his dagger to dispatch him, when Hypsipyle, suddenly arriving, arrests the blow, threatening to alarm Jason. She obliges him to deliver up his arms, but Learchus is revenged upon her by himself awakening Jason and crying out that he is betrayed. The Thessalian prince starts up, beholds Hypsipyle with a dagger in her hand

and doubts not for a moment that she, who had assassinated her father, is now aiming at her lover's life. In vain she attempts to exculpate herself and to inform him of the truth; Jason listens to her with horror and rejects her caresses with disgust. She is no sooner gone than Thoas, approaching Jason, convinces him of the entire innocence of Hypsipyle. Jason immediately rouses his companions. He swears to snatch Hypsipyle from the palace and from the power of these furies; to solicit her forgiveness and to take vengeance for the blood which the Lemnian women have shed.

In the beginning of the third act we find ourselves in a secluded spot, not far from the seashore, where Learchus is lying in ambuscade together with two of his piratical followers. Thoas, whose anxiety has drawn him out of the tents of Jason, is approaching, but Learchus, with his two followers, judging himself no match for the old king, dispatches his comrades for more assistance, while he attempts to amuse Thoas until their return. He pretends to make a confession and to entreat the king's forgiveness of his crime; and on receiving pardon he takes his hand in token of reconciliation. The next moment Thoas is surrounded by the pirates, and Learchus, suddenly changing his tone, calls on him to surrender. Such are these variations of fortune, called by the Italians "fine theatrical strokes." The language made use of in these surprising turns is imbued with the same defects; we have enough of spirit and of elevation of manner, but nothing natural and true. They are followed by the plaudits of the theatre; we admire and we recur to them, but the

frequent antitheses give them a peculiar air of affectation. Thus Learchus says to the king, who despises life:

Learchus.—Nay, these are dreams!

There is no thing so vile
But loves to live. 'Tis a deceitful wile,
A tale told only to the idiot throng,
Of heroes' hearts firm amidst utter woe,
And thine (I read thy soul) is trembling now.

The reply of Thoas is almost a parody of the above:

Thoas.—

Are they dreams?

I know thou canst not be at peace;
For virtue with ourselves is born,
Whose love, though spurn'd, deserts us never;
And whips those faults, from which it fails to shield us.
It is Heaven's voice! and if we hear it not,
Woe to us; for the very worst of evils
Is when the sinner bears within his breast
The longing after good, the sense of right,
Even in his own despite.
I read thy soul, and know ev'n now it trembles.

Meanwhile Rhodope, who saw Thoas borne away by the pirates, and Hypsipyle, informed of the fact, have recourse to Jason's assistance and excite him to vengeance. The scene is altered, and we behold the seaport, where the ships of Learchus are at anchor. Learchus, with the captive Thoas, is already on board, while Jason, Hypsipyle and Rhodope appear in pursuit of them with the Argonauts. Jason wishes instantly to attack the ships of the enemy, but Learchus, standing upon the deck, threatens to dispatch Thoas with the

weapon which he holds suspended over the old man's head. He refuses to restore his prisoner until Hypsipyle shall surrender herself into his hands. This Hypsipyle, notwithstanding her own fear and the opposition of Thoas and Jason, resolves to do, and slowly approaches the pirate's vessel. Jason then observes Eurynome, who is in search of her son Learchus, and, seizing her, threatens to kill her unless Thoas is set at liberty. The two victims are trembling under the knives of their respective assassins, on each side of the stage. When this spectacle has been exhibited a sufficient time, Learchus yields and agrees to exchange Thoas for his mother; and, as if to carry improbability to its highest point, after expressing remorse and reproaching himself for this act of virtue, he stabs himself for the weakness he has shown and throws himself into the sea.

Few dramas exhibit greater study of theatrical effect than *Hypsipyle*, and if we except its total want of probability without requiring of the author to account in a natural manner for the incidents introduced, few, perhaps, will be found that possess a greater degree of interest. But the same theatrical surprises are repeated until they weary the patience of the audience. We see the dagger at the throat of a father, a mother, a son or a beauty; and the same laconic reply is given to all the finest speeches in the piece, "Approach, or he dies." We have also convenient liberators with the weapons which they have just snatched from the real assassins in their hands, and who are themselves accused of the crime; and mothers who, persuading themselves that

they are in pursuit of their worst enemy, find an only son in his place, but not until they have brought him into the extremest jeopardy. Such materials are the common property of Italian tragedy. The incidents and characters are already drawn out, and the situations capable of being transferred elsewhere without distinction of time or place, thus rendering the drama of modern Italy so easy a production that every troupe of players used to engage its own poet. Metastasio's characters are likewise brought upon the scene with more tedious repetition than even the incidents and situations of his pieces. A total want of rational interest and too great exaggeration of the different virtues and vices of the personages he displays admit of little variety in the poet's characters. We are never presented with any of those half-villains or half-virtuous people so frequently met with elsewhere. The author takes it for granted that one crime is followed by all the rest in the decalogue, and that it is impossible for a virtuous character to commit a single fault, insomuch that he equally fails to excite our sympathy in the transcendent villains and in those immaculate characters who invariably triumph over their passions after the struggle of a moment.

Dido Abandoned.

In his *Dido Abandoned*, which was his first acted piece, Metastasio failed to elicit the degree of interest of which the theme is susceptible. His *Æneas* is a disgusting character; but the charm of the versification,

even in this, his first attempt, had the effect of raising him far above his competitors. The favorable impression was increased by later efforts; and in 1729, his reputation procured for him an appointment by Charles VI as imperial poet at Vienna, in place of Apostolo Zeno. There Metastasio continued to reside, in the service of the court, until his death, at the age of eighty-four. Nine of his pieces, composed during the first ten years of his residence at Vienna, are held in much higher esteem than the remainder, and of some of these a brief description will be given.

The Olimpiade.

The *Olimpiade* is of a soft and impassioned character throughout; the style extremely pure; with little probability of incident, and little of real nature, except in the passion of love. The scene is placed amid the Olympic games, where the poet supposes Clisthenes, king of Sicyon, to preside. The king has promised his daughter Aristeia as a prize to the victor in the wrestling match. There are two friends, Lycidas and Megacles, in love with Aristeia; the former has had no experience in the Olympic combats; but the latter has frequently been victorious in the wrestling ring. Lycidas had formerly saved the life of Megacles, who now wishes to win the beauty for his friend, and in his friend's name. Megacles disguises from him the passion which he himself entertains for the fair Aristeia; he enters the lists, is victorious over all competitors, and yielding the prize into the arms of his friend, pre-

precipitates himself into the river, to avoid seeing the object of his love in the embraces of another. The catastrophe is, nevertheless, brought about favorably for all parties. A fisherman snatches Megacles from the waves; Argene, formerly deserted by Lycidas, inspires him with renewed passion while present at the games; and Lycidas is finally discovered to be the son of Clisthenes, and brother to Aristeia. Thus the two pairs of lovers are united agreeably to the dictates of their first passion.

In impassioned eloquence the *Olimpiade* probably excels all the other works of Metastasio. In the scene between Megacles and Aristeia, in which he acquaints her with his triumph, but that he has triumphed for another instead of himself, and in which he offers the sacrifice of both at the shrine of friendship, the interest assumes a high and pathetic tone. The farewell of Megacles to the object of his love and to his friend, is expressed in the most eloquent and fervid language, the close of which falls into a sweetness of harmony beyond the power of mere human words to produce. Music appears to have lavished upon it the utmost tenderness of which the art is susceptible, and expresses the most delicate varieties and shades of feeling with an eloquence of which language can convey but a faint impression. The quatrain with which the air closes is a burst of grief which reveals the innermost recesses of a heart overwhelmed with despair.

Megacles.—This is the mystery—

You know the secret now—the Prince of Crete

Dies to possess you. He implores my pity;
He saved my life—how can I spurn his prayer?

Aristea.—You fought——

Meg.—It was for him.

Aris.—Ah! would you lose me?

Meg.—Yes! to preserve my honor, and remain
Still worthy of your love.

Aris.—And I must therefore——

Meg.—Crown the great work, most generous, most adored.

O Aristea, help the grateful throbs
Of my torn heart, and be to Lycidas
All thou hast been to me. Yes, love him, love him!
He is deserving of such infinite bliss:
We have been one in heart;
If thou art his, we do not wholly part.

Aris.—What have you said? Am I, indeed, so fallen
From my bright heaven of hopes, to the abyss
Of wretchedness? It cannot be. No! find him
Some nobler recompense; for without you
Life is not life.

Meg.—Yet must I say adieu.

Do not thou also, beauteous Aristea,
Tempt me to be a traitor to my virtue.
Too dreadful are the pangs of this resolve;
And now the least of these sweet fond emotions
Makes all my efforts vain.

Aris.—Alas! you leave me——

Meg.—It is too true.

Aris.—True, dost thou say? and when?

Meg.—This, this ('tis worse than death to utter it),
This is my last farewell.

Aris.—The last! Ungrateful!

Help me, ye gods—I sink into the earth;
Cold damps are on my brow; I feel a hand,
A chilly hand, oppress my very heart.

* * * * *

Meg.—Me miserable! what do I behold?

Her grief hath killed her. Gentle love, look on me;

Do not, bright Aristeia, thus yield up
 Thy nobler self. Hear! Megacles is with thee;
 I will not leave thee. Ah! she does not heed me.
 Are there more woes in store for me, ye gods?
 Farewell, farewell forever.
 And may the Fates be kinder
 To thee, love, than to me!
 Ye gods, preserve your noblest work below.
 And the bright days I lose, on her bestow!

My Lycidas, O hear:
 My fate would she discover,
 And say: Where is he fled?
 Then answer thou: Thy lover,
 Thine hapless friend, is dead,
 Yet no! a grief so bitter
 She shall not feel. Oh, say,
 He sorely wept to quit her,
 And weeping, went his way.
 O mighty gulf of woe!
 To leave my love, my heart!
 For evermore to part!
 To part, and leave her so.

La Clemenza Di Tito.

Among the historical productions of Metastasio *La Clemenza di Tito* is held in the highest estimation. Its subject, with slight differences, is the same as that of Corneille's *Cinna*, describing a conspiracy against a generous sovereign, directed by a female hand. Vitellia, secretly in love with Titus, prevails upon Sextus to enter into a conspiracy against him, only that she may be revenged upon him for his preference of the charms of Berenice. Sextus is the friend of Titus, and has not even the shadow of a complaint against him, for Titus is the best of men, and Metastasio is an excellent painter

of those faultless monsters without a spot. Indeed, there is a certain effeminacy in the character of the poet, very favorable to the expression of goodness and tenderness of soul. Titus always appears with a gentle, confiding and even fondling manner; his generosity surpasses that of Augustus; it is beyond all limits, but it would produce a greater impression did it proceed from a somewhat firmer character, and if the dignity of the sovereign were allowed to mingle with the kindness of the friend. Love is always so far the acting principle of all Metastasio's pieces, that death nowhere appears under a more serious aspect than in the speeches of his lovers. They talk of it and menace each other with it incessantly. But in the midst of the agitation which this is intended to excite, we feel a comfortable conviction that all is not meant that meets the ear. The rage of Vitellia, the daggers of Sextus, and even the conflagration of the Capitol itself, have altogether such a tempered fury as will not suffer us to be really alarmed. In this piece, as well as in the *Olimpiade*, the grand struggles of generosity are repeated, until they weary the mind. Annius, a friend of Sextus, renounces his mistress Servilia in favor of Titus; while Servilia, on her side, renounces the throne of Titus for the love of Annius. The latter, having exchanged dresses with Sextus, carries on his robe the conspirator's badge, and receives the accusations of the object of his affections and of his prince, who take him for a traitor, without a reply. Sextus, who is, in his turn, discovered, is also silent, in spite of the most pressing entreaties of Titus, in order that he may not involve Vitellia. These two

incidents, however, have a more probable appearance than some of the preceding, and are treated in a very delicate manner. Sextus is condemned to death, and the following are the concluding lines addressed by him to Vitellia at the moment when he thinks he is about to die for her sake:

If you should feel upon your cheek
Some breath, like Zephyr, wandering nigh,
Oh say: This is the parting-sigh
Of the fond youth who dies for me!
Your lover's spirit hovering near,
Shall find a balm for every tear
And sorrow past, to hear you kindly speak.

When Titus afterward wishes to draw from Sextus an avowal of his fault, the gentleness of the one and the sufferings of the other are both finely expressed.

Titus.—Hear me, O Sextus!

Think not your sovereign speaks. He is not here.
Now open all your heart, as friend to friend:
Believe my word, Augustus shall not hear it.
Give me the reasons of your crime. Together
Let us find means of pardon—no less pleasure
To Titus, than to Sextus.

Sextus.— I say nothing!

My fault admits of no defense.

Tit.— At least,

Grant it, in friendship. I have not concealed
From you the nearest secrets of my state,
And surely merit some return of confidence
From Sextus.

Sex.— This is torment, such as never
Was known before: either I must offend him,
Or worse, betray Vitellia. (*Aside.*)

Tit.—

Doubt you still?

Sextus, you wound my heart;
You outrage friendship, and insult the friend,
With these unkind suspicions. Think once more,
And grant my just request.

Sex.—

What fatal sign

Cast its malignant influence on my birth!

This play is dedicated to the Emperor Charles VI, the same who, in the year 1714, delivered up the faithful and unfortunate Catalonians to the ferocious vengeance of Louis XIV and of Philip V, leaving thousands of victims to perish on the scaffold. Yet Metastasio says: "I had not ventured thus to describe you, were you not universally recognized in the character of Titus; and is the poet accountable for the strong resemblance? If you would avoid everywhere meeting with your own likeness, you must command the Muses, O victorious Augustus, no longer to sing the exploits of heroes."

Preëminence of Metastasio.

With a genius embracing so many opposite qualities, the most refined graces of Metastasio's poetry are united with false and exaggerated descriptions; the most correct and simple expression of the passions, with a total want of probability in the characters; and an inexhaustible variety in the details, with a tedious sameness in the ground-work of the plots. There is even a degree of tediousness felt in the mixture of the lyric and dramatic verses, which interrupts the expression of the sense, to give play to the imagination; but when we

consider Metastasio in his true character, as the great poet of the opera, he will always excite the admiration due to an author advancing, without a guide, in a new career, and leaving none who ventured to imitate him. Other Italian librettists may have rivaled him in tunefulness, or in the faculty of dramatic construction; but none in both respects; nor have any been able to impart such literary qualities to their compositions.

The musical drama is despised as a branch of literature, though some of the plays of Euripides and his imitators are almost in the nature of opera. The first and almost the only requisite is that the words should be a suitable vehicle for the music, and if there is a sufficient degree of skill in dramatic construction, poetry may be and commonly is dispensed with. It is the great distinction of Metastasio that he was not only a consummate playwright but a lyrical poet of the highest order, a perfect storehouse of melody; so that to him it was as easy to sing as to speak. Few writers have proved themselves such thorough masters of technique, and none have more thoroughly solved the problem of investing the amusement of the hour with abiding literary worth.

Metastasio lived to see the publication of forty editions of his works. He was one of the most rapid as well as the most pleasing of writers, often composing the entire libretto of an opera in twenty-four hours, while one of the best of his pieces, the *Achille in Sciro*, was written, set to music, provided with scenery and thoroughly prepared for representation within eighteen days. After squandering most of his patrimony he lived

in luxury from the proceeds of his works, but died in poverty.

Although the musical drama was unfavorable to more legitimate forms of the art, the seventeenth century was remarkable for its abundance of dramatic authors. Innumerable tragedies, comedies and pastorals were everywhere recited before the different courts and in the theatres of Italy; but none of them were comparable to those of a former age; nor are they, indeed, to be placed in competition with those of the eighteenth century. The tragedies are singularly deficient in their delineation of characters and of manners; the style partakes of the inflated taste of the age, and the action flags, while the authors seem to have hesitated between the pedantic imitation of the ancients and the mistaken route pursued by the moderns. Their productions are worthy of mention only as objects of literary research and curiosity; nor could they be represented or endured in any theatre, much less supply other writers with models or ideas. It seemed to be the poet's sole object to surprise the spectator by the brilliancy of the scenery or by a bustling movement on the stage, while probability was wholly sacrificed to the general desire of witnessing the appearance of monsters, combats and processions of chariots and horses. The comedies were, in the same manner, unconnected, insipid, low, and appreciated only by the vulgar. The pastorals became more affected, unnatural and dull, insomuch that the opera seemed the only species of theatrical representation at all esteemed, or which, indeed, deserved to be so.

III.

Eighteenth Century Drama.

The political situation in Italy underwent but slight improvement during the eighteenth century, and the little that was gained was more than counterbalanced by the habits of sloth and indifference contracted by the people. While the disposition of Italian potentates toward the cause of letters was more encouraging than in the preceding age, none of them were fitted, either by nature or training, to become patrons of literature. A few may be entitled to the credit of good intentions, but none can lay claim to a high reputation in the historical records of the times. A narrow spirit pervades alike their counsels and their administration. The exercise of strict control, an obstinate dislike to everything new, and a spirit of jealous disquietude and mistrust, pervaded all departments of the government, habituating the people to a state of passive obedience and restraint. The corruption of manners was the result rather of the dictates of fashion than of any particular excess of the passions; frivolity took the place of serious reflection, and long habits of indolence, enfeebling the mind, seemed to unfit it for serious occupation. Yet

there were not wanting a few spirits who lamented the situation, and had courage enough to attempt favorable change.

Martelli.

One of the first attempts to supply the deficiency, for which the Italians had been reproached, in dramatic poetry proceeded from a very tame imitator of French models, who could boast nothing of the genius they displayed. This was Pietro Jacopo Martelli, a professor of literature at Bologna, where he died in 1727. He took Corneille for his prototype in tragedy and Molière in comedy, but his talents were not above mediocrity, and he succeeded in preserving only the outline of their pieces, the combination of their scenes, and their theatrical regulations, while the spirit and power of their drama were beyond his reach. Contemporary with him was Faggiuoli, a Florentine, who also attempted to introduce a new style of comedy on the model of the French. The chief merit of his dramas, contained in seven volumes, will be found in their correct delineation of manners and in the ease and purity of their language, but the fire and force of dramatic genius are wanting. Even the finest passages possess only a negative kind of beauty, and, like Martelli, he failed to fill the void in the annals of the Italian drama.

Maffei.

The only tragic writer worthy of the name whose career belongs to the first half of the eighteenth century,

is the marchese Scipione Maffei, whose tastes and talents are displayed to the best advantage in the drama of *Merope*. Maffei was born at Verona in 1675, and, like most Italians in his profession, began to write verses at a very early age, producing, among other works, a poem in one hundred cantos on the harmony of human virtues. Consulting the interests of the theatre, he made a selection of the best tragedies and comedies written in the preceding century, but which theatrical managers had suffered to sink into oblivion. Jealous of the fame of the French drama, he produced a critique on the *Rodogune* of Corneille, including general strictures upon the taste of the French. Eventually he resolved, at the age of thirty-nine, to present the world with a model of real tragedy, such as he conceived it should be, and availed himself both of the Greek and French dramatists, without tamely following in their path. His play, brought forward at Modena in the spring of 1713, enjoyed a run altogether unexampled in the annals of the Italian theatre. When published it reached the sixtieth edition, and the autograph manuscript of the author is preserved as one of the sacred relics of Italy.

As the *Merope* of Euripides is lost to the moderns, Maffei may be considered the first author possessed of genius who availed himself of this very dramatic and affecting story, which has since been treated by Voltaire and Alfieri. Maffei piqued himself on the possibility of convincing the moderns that a tragedy might be written without a syllable of love, and without adopting the romantic taste which prevailed in the drama of France. He succeeded in exciting and maintaining a

very lively interest by the danger to which a mother exposes her only son, under the idea that she is about to avenge him. A few of the scenes are remarkable for the contrast offered between the fury of Merope and the resignation of Ægisthus, who is supposed to feel a presentiment that she is his mother. But the idea of Merope burning to execute vengeance, with her own hands, upon a prisoner lying bound before her, instead of awakening our sympathy makes us recoil with disgust. The anxiety of the spectators is well supported, and even becomes more intense from scene to scene, although it is rather that of an intrigue than of tragedy proper. Too many adventures, also, are interwoven, and sometimes have no real connection with the plot, while the incidents come upon us as if by chance. The whole is composed in blank verse, and the lines are equally simple, elevated and harmonious. Maffei, ridiculing the measured stateliness of French verse, wished to present us with a more natural and easy style, and perhaps occasionally ran into the opposite extreme of a trivial or prosaic mode of expression. This striving after simplicity, however, sometimes gives him language of a truer and more touching description, as when Eurysces, Merope's confidant, attempts to console her, on hearing of the death of her son, by bringing to mind examples of fortitude under similar calamities:

Eurysces.—Think how the mighty king, for whom all Greece
In arms arose 'gainst Troy, in Aulis gave
His dear child to a fierce and cruel death,
As the gods will'd it,

Merope.—But, O Eurysyes, the great gods had never
Required it of a mother.

With all its merits, Maffei's play shares the almost universal fault of modern tragedies based on classical subjects, it is essentially a work of reflection. Composed, as it was, for the purpose of rescuing the Italian drama from its degraded condition, it served to rouse the dramatists of the age to fresh exertions, and a host of writers took him for their model, none of whom achieved or deserved a lasting reputation.

Maffei also wrote at least two comedies, which do not appear to have met with much success. Yet they were far superior to those of the abbate Pietro Chiari, poet at the court of the duke of Modena, who, in the hope of producing a new era in the annals of dramatic art, produced ten volumes of comedies in verse. These were partially successful, being acted and read, as his novels had been read, chiefly by women—one of the strongest evidences of the corruption of the drama and of good taste. Their chief characteristic is commonplace affectation and an utter absence of interesting features, making them equally tedious and ridiculous.

Goldoni.

It was reserved for Carlo Goldoni to effect the dramatic revolution so frequently attempted by men whose talents were unequal to the task. Goldoni, a native of Venice, was born in 1707, and almost lived out the century, for he died in Paris in 1792. In his memoirs,

written by himself, is depicted with the utmost liveliness the born comedian, careless, light-hearted and with a happy temperament, proof against all strokes of fate, yet thoroughly respectable and honorable. Such characters were common enough in Italy, and it is somewhat remarkable that he should have been the only one of his many talented countrymen to win a European reputation as a comic writer. In tragedy other names have appeared since the death of Alfieri, but Goldoni still stands alone. This may be partly explained by the absence in comedy of a literary style which at the same time was national. Goldoni gave to his country a classical form, which, though it has since been cultivated, has never been cultivated by a master.

The son of a physician, Goldoni inherited his dramatic tastes from his grandfather, and all attempts to direct his activity into other channels were of no avail. Educated as a lawyer, and holding lucrative positions as secretary and councillor, he seemed, indeed, at one time to have settled down to the practice of law, but an unexpected summons to Venice, after an absence of several years, changed his career, and thenceforth he devoted himself to writing plays and managing theatres. It was his principal aim to supersede the comedy of masks and the comedy of intrigue by representations of actual life and manners, and in this he was entirely successful, though not until after powerful opposition from Carlo Gozzi, who accused him of having deprived the Italian theatre of the charms of poetry and imagination. Gozzi had obtained a wide reputation by his fairy dramas, and this so irritated Goldoni that he removed

to Paris, where, receiving a position at court, he passed the latter part of his life in composing plays and writing his memoirs in French. Notwithstanding that his works became extremely popular in Italy, he could never be induced to revisit his native land. In his last years he was afflicted with blindness, and died in extreme poverty, a pension granted by Louis XVI being withdrawn by the National Convention. It was, however, restored to his widow, at the pleading of the poet Chénier. "She is old," he urged, "she is seventy-six, and her husband has left her no heritage save his illustrious name, his virtues and his poverty."

Goldoni's first dramatic venture, a melodrama named *Amalasunta*, was unsuccessful. Submitting it to Count Prata, director of the opera, he was told that his piece "was composed with due regard to the rules of Aristotle and Horace, but not according to those laid down for the Italian drama." "In France," continued the count, "you can try to please the public, but here in Italy it is the actors and actresses whom you must consult, as well as the composer of the music and the stage decorators. Everything must be done according to a certain form which I will explain to you." Goldoni thanked his critic, went back to his inn and ordered a fire, into which he threw the manuscript of his *Amalasunta*. He then called for a good supper, which he consumed with relish, after which he went to bed and slept tranquilly throughout the night.

Goldoni's next attempt was more successful, though of its success he afterward professed himself ashamed. While holding a position as chamberlain in the house-

hold of the Venetian ambassador at Milan he made the acquaintance of a quack doctor who went by the name of Antonimo, and was the very prince of charlatans. Among other devices to attract customers the latter carried with him a company of actors, who, after assisting in selling his wares, gave a performance in his small theatre in a public square. It so happened that a company of comedians engaged for the Easter season at Milan failed to keep its appointment, whereupon, at Antonimo's request, Goldoni wrote an intermezzo entitled *The Venetian Gondolier*, which, as he says, "met with all the success so slight an effort deserved." This trifle, despised by its author, was the first of his performed and published works.

Goldoni took for his models the plays of Molière, and whenever a piece of his own succeeded he whispered to himself, "Good, but not yet Molière." The great Frenchman was the object of his idolatry, and justly so, for not only was Molière the true monarch of the comic stage but nearness of time and place, with similarity of manners, made the comedies of the French master suitable for imitation. By the middle of the eighteenth century none but literary enemies contested Goldoni's title as the Italian Molière, and this has been confirmed by the suffrage of posterity. *Un Curioso Accidente*, *Il Vero Amico*, *La Bottega del Caffè*, *La Locandiera* and many other comedies that might be named, while depicting the manners of a past age, retain all their freshness in our own. Italian audiences even yet take delight in his pictures of their ancestors. "One of the best theatres in Venice," says Symonds, "is called by

Goldoni's name. His house is pointed out by gondoliers to tourists. His statue stands almost within sight of the Rialto. His comedies are repeatedly given by companies of celebrated actors." As Cæsar called Terence a half-Menander, so we may term Goldoni a half-Molière. The Menandrine element in Molière is present with him, the Aristophanic is missing. Goldoni wants the French writer's overpowering comic force, and is happier in "catching the manners living as they rise" than in laying bare the depths of the heart. Wit, gayety, elegance, simplicity, truth to nature, skill in dramatic construction, render him nevertheless a most delightful writer, and his fame is the more assured from his position as his country's sole eminent representative in the region of polite comedy. "The appearance of Goldoni on the stage," says Voltaire, "might, like the poem of Trissino, be termed: 'Italy Delivered from the Goths.'"

In the outset of his career, Goldoni found the comic stage divided between two different species of dramatic composition—classical comedy and the comedy of masks. The first was the result of careful study and strict observance of Aristotelian rules, but possessing none of the qualities sought for by the public. Some of them were pedantic copies of the ancients; others were imitations of these copies, and still others were borrowed from the French. People might admire these pseudo-classic dramas; they certainly admired the more brilliant comedy of Goldoni, but the *commedia dell'arte*, or comedy of masks, is what pleased them best. To suppress the last of these forms the great comedian

devoted his utmost efforts, but though he succeeded partially, and for a time, the task was beyond him; for in the comedy of masks was the real dramatic life of the nation, and though, except in the hands of Gozzi, it never assumed the form of dramatic literature, it was transplanted into several European nations in the costume of harlequin, columbine and pantaloon.

Goldoni is considered by the Italians as the author who carried dramatic art in Italy to its highest point of perfection, and he possessed no common powers. He had a fertility of invention which readily supplied him with new subjects for his comic muse, and such facility of composition that he infrequently produced a comedy of five acts in verse within less than as many days, a rapidity which prevented him from bestowing sufficient pains upon the correctness of his work. His dialogue was extremely animated, earnest and full of meaning; and with a very exact knowledge of the national manners he combined the rare faculty of giving a lively picture of them on the stage. To this he added an exquisite relish and appreciation of Italian humor, which delights in amusing absurdities and in the genius of the buffoon.

If Goldoni's works were not so highly esteemed by foreigners as by the people of Italy, this was chiefly due to the want of intensity in the Italian character so essential for dramatic display. Among other nations the passion of love has always formed the animating principle of comedy, as well as of romance, being at once the most lively and poetical of all the social passions and that which gives the greatest development to char-

acter and the strongest color to life. But lasting and impassioned love, taking its source at once in the heart, the understanding and the senses, and combining their qualities in one; a love which finds its pleasure upon mutual preference cannot easily be supposed, in Italian manners, to aim at marriage as its ultimate object. Educated in complete seclusion from society, and obliged to maintain the utmost reserve, their young women are subjected to as severe an ordeal of public opinion for merely appearing in the world as for engaging in a dishonorable intrigue. They are thus, in some instances, induced to yield the rein to their feelings, not only in a very inconsiderate manner but with an impetuosity and imprudence equally surprising and revolting, and they often learn to think less of indulging a choice of affection than of obtaining, in a general way, an establishment in marriage. The latter they look forward to as the means of at once throwing off the restraints imposed upon them by their parents and by society, together with the affectation of a reserve, as little agreeable to their inclinations as to their taste.

The Twins of Venice.

In Italy it is made a point of duty in a discreet and sensible girl to accept the husband provided for her by her parents, whatever may be her objections to his mental, moral or physical qualities, and it is this kind of moral, always inculcated by the comic poet, which exhibits such an amusing contrast to our preconceived opinions on the subject. Thus, in Goldoni's *Twins of*

Venice, a subject treated by the dramatists of every nation since the time of Plautus, and the humor of which depends upon the mistakes arising out of the perfect resemblance between two brothers, we behold one of them just arrived from the mountains of Bergamo to espouse Rosetta, the daughter of Doctor Balanzoni. Now, Rosetta is a virtuous and prudent girl, whom the author delights to hold up as a model of duty to the young ladies of Italy. Her lover is an idle, ignorant, cowardly fool, a sort of harlequin, intended to support the absurdity of the piece to its close. Rosetta is at some pains to repel his impertinence and to keep him at a distance, although she frequently gives us to understand that his presence is not entirely disagreeable. The author rids himself of this troublesome hero by poisoning him upon the stage, and further justifies this summary mode of proceeding in his preface by the ingenious argument that, so far from exciting any tragic feelings, he only amuses us by the ridiculous manner in which he meets with his death. But the spectators are apt to view the affair in another light, and to feel that the levity of a buffoon, attending the commission of an atrocious crime, only adds to its horror. However this may be, Rosetta, after expressing a proper sense of despair, in the next scene accepts the hand of Lelio, another species of the genus fool, whose boastful falsehoods and absurdities had sustained the first four acts. In the fifth he has the option of Rosetta's hand, with a fortune of fifteen thousand crowns, and exclaims in the presence of the lady to whom he has been affianced: "She cannot but be agreeable; fifteen thousand

crowns would confer beauty upon any woman." Rosetta's consent is then asked, and she replies that she always takes pleasure in fulfilling the wishes of her father. Though such utter want of delicacy is too frequently met with in the manners of the people, we can hardly persuade ourselves that it is adapted to the stage.

Defects in Goldoni's Drama.

The female characters of most of Goldoni's pieces discover a similar want of delicacy in conduct and sentiment. Thus, in his *Donna di testa debile*, or *Weak-headed Lady*, Elvira, seconded by her friend, makes improper advances to Fausto, the lover of her sister-in-law; not that she cares for him, but merely because she does not wish her sister-in-law to be married before her. She also gives a very sharp lecture to her uncle for not providing her with a separate establishment in marriage. All Goldoni's Rosettas—and there are many of them—are sentimental characters; amorous, as young women are apt to be, but very obedient; anxious to be married, but with the greatest respect for paternal authority. His Beatrices, on the other hand, are of an opposite type, lively, impetuous and full of vivacity and frolic. Sometimes, indeed, waywardness carries them beyond all conventional bounds. We meet with them just eloped from their homes, pursuing their admirers in a student's gown or a military uniform, and after divers journeyings from place to place, always concluding their adventures happily.

Such personages have a very strong infusion of the

national character, no country in the world affording so many instances of the triumph of passion, when once the fair martyrs have overcome all obstacles in order to yield themselves up to its dictates; but the results as described by the romance are by no means probable. There is no truth in them, and it is prejudicial, in a moral point of view, to give an honorable culmination to a vicious and dissipated course of life, or to suppose that female virtue incurs no risk by an elopement from the paternal mansion. It may, of course, be said that regard to dramatic propriety, not always favorable to morals, would not admit of a less fortunate conclusion to the story. In truth the scenic heroines, by pretty general agreement, are supposed on the whole to entertain only virtuous sentiments, and this rule gives a singular air of incongruity to the representation of manners, which are very far from immaculate. The restraint imposed in Italy upon young unmarried women and the unbounded liberty granted to those who were wedded invariably led, according to the customs of the country, to the reign of love, subsequent to that of marriage. Love was then no longer confounded with the vague desire of a settlement in life, but sprung from intimate acquaintance, coincidence of feelings and a union of the affections. This, however, had a very unfavorable influence on all the relations of social life, on the peace of families, the education of children and the character of women.

Goldoni, though he called himself a reformer of the stage, never attempted to teach or enforce moral lessons. He accepted the life of the people around him,

and to it he held up his mirror. His business was to amuse his audience by depicting in a comic way their foibles, their faults, even their vices.

A Comedy Founded on Life.

The Curious Mishap, one of the most popular of Goldoni's plays, was founded on a story of real life which happened in Holland and was communicated to the author as a good subject for a play. The opening is the same as in the real story, with the details only slightly altered, and the intrigue is amusing, plausible and happily conceived. In the following scene Philibert holds converse with his daughter, while Gascoigne is packing the trunk of his master, De la Cotterie, a French lieutenant, wounded and a prisoner, who has been cared for in the home of Philibert. He is in love with Giannina, the daughter of his host, but Philibert intends him for Costanza, daughter of the broker Riccardo.

Philibert.—My daughter, what are you doing in this room?

Giannina.—Curiosity, sir, brought me here.

Phil.—And what excites your curiosity?

Gian.—To see a master who understands nothing of such things, and an awkward servant endeavoring to pack up a trunk.

Phil.—Do you know when he goes away?

Gian.—He intended going this morning, but, in walking across the room, his legs trembled so, that I fear he will not stand the journey.

Phil.—I think his present disease has deeper roots than his wound.

Gian.—Yet only one hurt has been discovered by the surgeons.

Phil.—Oh, there are wounds which they know nothing of.

Gian.—Every wound, however slight, makes its mark.

Phil.—Eh! there are weapons that give an inward wound.

Gian.—Without breaking the skin?

Phil.—Certainly.

Gian.—How do these wounds enter?

Phil.—By the eyes, the ears, the touch.

Gian.—You must mean by the percussion of the air.

Phil.—Air! no, I mean flame.

Gian.—Indeed, sir, I do not comprehend you.

Phil.—You do not choose to comprehend me.

Gian.—Do you think I have any mischievous design in my head?

Phil.—No; I think you a good girl, wise, prudent, who knows what the officer suffers from, and who, from a sense of propriety, appears not to know it.

Gian.—(Aside.) Poor me! his manner of talking alarms me.

Phil.—Giannina, you seem to me to blush.

Gian.—What you say, sir, of necessity makes me blush. I now begin to understand something of the mysterious wound of which you speak; but, be it as it may, I know neither his disease nor the remedy.

Phil.—My daughter, let us speak plainly. Monsieur de la Cotterie was perfectly cured a month after he arrived here; he was apparently in health, ate heartily, and began to recover his strength; he had a good complexion, and was the delight of our table and our circle. By degrees he grew sad, lost his appetite, became thin, and his gayety was changed to sighs. I am something of a philosopher, and suspect his disease is more of the mind than of the body, and, to speak still more plainly, I believe he is in love.

Gian.—It may be as you say; but I think, were he in love, he would not be leaving.

Phil.—Here again my philosophy explains everything. Suppose, by chance, the young lady of whom he is enamored were rich, dependent on her father, and could not encourage his hopes; would it be strange if despair counseled him to leave her?

Gian.—(Aside.) He seems to know all.

Phil.—And this tremor of the limbs, occurring just as he is to set out, must, I should say, viewed philosophically, arise from the conflict of two opposing passions.

Gian.—(Aside.) I could imprecate his philosophy!

Phil.—In short, the benevolence of my character, hospitality, to which my heart is much inclined, humanity itself, which causes me to desire the good of my neighbors, all force me to interest myself in him; but I would not wish my daughter to have any share in this disease.

Gian.—Ah, you make me laugh! Do I look thin and pale? am I melancholy? What says your philosophy to the external signs of my countenance and of my cheerfulness?

Phil.—I am suspended between two opinions: you have either the power of self-control, or are practicing deception.

Gian.—Have you ever found me capable of deception?

Phil.—Never, and for that reason I cannot believe it now.

Gian.—You have determined in your own mind that the officer is in love, which is very likely; but I am not the only person he may be suspected of loving.

Phil.—As the lieutenant leaves our house so seldom, it is fair to infer his disease had its origin here.

Gian.—There are many handsome young ladies who visit us, and one of them may be his choice.

Phil.—Very true; and, as you are with them, and do not want wit and observation, you ought to know exactly how it is, and to relieve me from all suspicion.

Gian.—But if I have promised not to speak of it?

Phil.—A father should be excepted from such a promise.

Gian.—Yes, certainly, especially if silence can cause him any pain.

Phil.—Come, then, my good girl, let us hear.—(Aside.) I am sorry I suspected her.

Gian.—(Aside.) I find myself obliged to deceive him.
—Do you know, sir, that poor Monsieur de la Cotterie loves to madness Mademoiselle Costanza?

Phil.—What! the daughter of Monsieur Riccardo?

Gian.—The same.

Phil.—And does the girl return his affection?

Gian.—With the greatest possible ardor.

Phil.—And what obstacle prevents the accomplishment of their wishes?

Gian.—Why, the father of the girl will hardly consent to give her to an officer who is not in a condition to maintain her reputably.

Phil.—A curious obstacle, truly. And who is this Monsieur Riccardo, that he has such rigorous maxims? He is nothing but a broker, sprung from the mud, grown rich amid the execrations of the people. Does he think to rank himself among the merchants of Holland? A marriage with an officer would be an honor to his daughter, and he could not better dispose of his ill-got wealth.

Gian.—It seems, then, if you were a broker, you would not refuse him your daughter?

Phil.—Assuredly not.

Gian.—But, being a Dutch merchant, the match does not suit you?

Phil.—No, certainly not; not at all—you know it very well.

Gian.—So I thought.

Phil.—I must interest myself in behalf of Monsieur de la Cotterie.

Gian.—In what manner, sir?

Phil.—By persuading Monsieur Riccardo to give him his daughter.

Gian.—I would not advise you to meddle in the affair.

Phil.—Let us hear what the lieutenant will say.

Gian.—Yes, you should hear him first. (Aside.) I must give him warning beforehand.

Phil.—Do you think he will set out on his journey immediately?

Gian.—I know he has already ordered his horses.

Phil.—I will send directly to see.

Gian.—I will go myself, sir. (*Aside.*) I must take care not to make matters worse. (*Exit.*)

Phil.—(*Alone.*) I feel I have done injustice to my daughter in distrusting her; it is a happiness to me to be again certain of her sincerity. There may be some concealed deception in her words, but I will not believe her so artful; she is the daughter of a man who loves truth, and never departs from it, even in jest. Everything she tells me is quite reasonable: the officer may be in love with Mademoiselle Costanza; the absurd pride of the father considers the match as far below what his daughter is entitled to. I will, if possible, bring about the marriage by my mediation. On the one hand, we have nobility reduced in circumstances; on the other, a little accidental wealth; these fairly balance one another, and each party will find the alliance advantageous.

In the second act Philibert is outwitted by his clever daughter. Mademoiselle Costanza has called on her and is waiting till she appears.

Costanza.—Who would ever have thought Monsieur de la Cotterie had such a liking for me? It is true he has always treated me with politeness, and been ready to converse with me; but I cannot say I have observed any great signs of love. Now, I have always loved him, but have not had courage enough to show it. I flatter myself he, too, loves me, and for the same reason conceals it; in truth a modest officer is a strange animal, and it is hard to believe in its existence. Monsieur Philibert must have reasons for what he says, and I am well pleased to think him not mistaken, especially as I have no evidence that it is so. Here comes my handsome soldier—but Mademoiselle Giannina is with him; she never permits us to be alone together for a moment. I have some suspicion she is my rival.

Enter Giannina and De la Cotterie.

Giannina.—Keep your seat, mademoiselle; excuse me for having left you alone for a little while. I know you will be kind enough to forgive me, and I bring some one with me, who, I am sure, will secure your pardon.

Cost.—Though surely in your own house and with a real friend such ceremony is needless; your company is always agreeable. I desire you will put yourself to no inconvenience.

Gian.—Do you hear, lieutenant? You see we Dutch are not without wit.

De la Cotterie.—This is not the first time I have observed it.

Cost.—Monsieur de la Cotterie is in a house that does honor to our country, and if he admires ladies of wit, he need not go out of it.

Gian.—You are too polite, mademoiselle.

Cost.—I simply do justice to merit.

Gian.—Let us not dispute about our merits, but rather leave it to the lieutenant to decide.

De la Cot.—If you wish a decision, you must choose a better judge.

Gian.—A partial one, indeed, cannot be a good judge.

Cost.—And to say nothing of partiality, he feels under obligations to you as the mistress of the house.

Gian.—Oh, in France, the preference is always given to the guest: is it not so, lieutenant?

De la Cot.—It is no less the custom in Holland than in my own country.

Cost.—That is to say, the greater the merit, the greater the distinction with which they are treated.

Gian.—On that principle, you would be treated with the most distinction.

De la Cot.—(Aside.) I shall get into trouble if this conversation continues.

Cost.—By your leave, mademoiselle.

Gian.—Why do you leave us so soon?

Cost.—I am engaged to my aunt; I promised to dine with her to-day, and it is not amiss to go early.

Gian.—Oh, it is too early; your aunt is old, and you will perhaps still find her in bed.

De la Cot.—(Aside.) Do not prevent her from going.

Gian.—He begs me to detain you.

Cost.—I am overpowered by your politeness. (Curtseying.) (Aside.) Her amusement is to torment me.

Gian.—(To Costanza.) What say you, my friend; have I not a good heart?

Cost.—I must praise your kindness to me.

Gian.—(To De la Cotterie.) And do you, too, own you are under obligations to me?

De la Cot.—Yes, certainly. I have reason to be grateful to you; you, who know my feelings, must be conscious of the great favor you do me. (Ironically.)

Gian.—(To Costanza.) You hear him? he is delighted.

Cost.—My dear friend, as you have such a regard for me, and take so much interest in him, allow me to speak freely to you. Your worthy father has told me a piece of news that overwhelms me with joy and surprise. If all he has told me be true, I pray you, Monsieur De la Cotterie, to confirm it.

Gian.—This is just what I anticipated; but as your conversation cannot be brief, and your aunt expects you, had you not better defer it to another opportunity?

De la Cot.—(Aside.) Heaven grant I may not be still more involved!

Cost.—A few words are all I ask.

Gian.—Come, lieutenant, take courage, and say all in a few words.

De la Cot.—Indeed, I have not the courage.

Gian.—No, my dear, it is impossible to express in a few words the infinite things he has to say to you.

Cost.—It will be enough if he says but one word.

Gian.—And what is that?

Cost.—That he really loves me.

Gian.—Pardon me; the lieutenant is too polite to speak of love to one young lady in the presence of another; but I can,

by going away, give you an opportunity of conversing together, and so remove all obstacles to an explanation. (Going.)

De la Cot.—Stay, mademoiselle.

Cost.—Yes, and mortify me no more. Be assured I should never have spoken with the boldness I have done, had you not led me to do so. I do not comprehend your meaning; there is an inconsistency in your conduct; but, be it as it may, time will bring the truth to light. And now permit me to take leave.

Gian.—My dear friend, pardon my inattention to you on first coming. You are mistress to go or remain, as you please.

Enter Philibert.

Philibert.—What delightful company! But why are you on your feet? why do you not sit down?

Gian.—Costanza is just going.

Phil.—(To Costanza.) Why so soon?

Gian.—Her aunt expects her.

Phil.—No, my dear young lady, do me the favor to remain; we may want you, and in affairs of this kind moments are often precious. I have sent to your father, to say I desire to have a conversation with him; I am certain he will come. We will have a private interview, and, however little he may be inclined to give his consent, I shall press him so as not to leave him time to repent; if we agree, I will call you both immediately into my room.

De la Cot.—(Aside.) Our situation is becoming more critical every moment.

Phil.—(To De la Cotterie.) You seem to me to be agitated.

Gian.—It is the excess of joy.

Phil.—(To Costanza.) And what effect has hope on you?

Cost.—I have more fear than hope.

Phil.—Rely on me. For the present, be content to remain here; and, as we do not know exactly when your father will come, stay to dinner with us.

Gian.—She cannot stay, sir.

Phil.—Why not?

Gian.—Because she promised her aunt to dine with her to-day.

Cost.—(Aside.) I see she does not wish me to remain.

Phil.—The aunt who expects you is your father's sister?

Cost.—Yes, sir.

Phil.—I know her; she is my particular friend. Leave it to me. I will get you released from the engagement, and, as soon as Monsieur Riccardo comes here, I will send word to her where you are, and she will be satisfied.

Cost.—I am grateful, Monsieur Philibert, for your great kindness; permit me for a moment to see my aunt, who is not well. I will soon return, and avail myself of your politeness.

Phil.—Very well; come back quickly.

Cost.—Good-morning to you; you will soon see me again.

Gian.—Good-by. (Aside.) If she does not come back I shall not break my heart.

Phil.—Adieu, my dear.—One moment. Lieutenant, for a man who has been in the wars, you do not seem quite as much at your ease as you should be.

Cost.—Why do you say so, sir?

Phil.—Because you are letting mademoiselle go away without taking notice of her—without one word of civility.

Cost.—Indeed, he has said but few.

De la Cot.—(To Philibert.) I ought not to abuse the privilege you have given me.

Phil.—(Aside.) I understand.—Giannina, a word with you.

Gian.—Yes, sir.

Phil.—(Aside, to Giannina.) It is not right for a young lady to thrust herself between two lovers in this manner; on account of you, they cannot speak two words to each other.

Gian.—(To Philibert.) They spoke in whispers together.

Phil.—(To De la Cotterie.) Well, if you have anything to say to her——

De la Cot.—There will be time enough, sir.

Phil.—(To Giannina.) Attend to me.

Cost.—(Aside, to De la Cotterie.) At least assure me of your affection.

De la Cot.—(Aside, to Costanza.) Excuse me, mademoiselle. (Aside.) I am exceedingly embarrassed.

Cost.—(Loud enough for all to hear.) Is it possible you will not say at once that you love me?

Gian.—(To Costanza, with asperity.) How many times do you want him to tell you so? Did he not say so before me,

Phil.—(To Giannina, with asperity.) No meddling, I tell you.

Cost.—Do not disturb yourself, mademoiselle; to see clearly here is not easy. I wish you all a good morning. Adieu, lieutenant. (Aside.) He is worried by this troublesome girl.

(Exit.)

Phil.—(To Giannina.) I am not pleased with your ways.

Gian.—My dear father, let me amuse myself a little. I, who am so free from love, like sometimes to vex these lovers. As it was I who discovered their passion for each other, they are under obligations to me for their approaching happiness; hence they may pardon my jokes.

Phil.—You girls are the devil! but the time will come, my daughter, when you will know how trying to lovers are these little teasing ways. You are now old enough, and the first good offer that presents itself, be prepared to accept it. What says Monsieur De la Cotterie? Am I not right?

De la Cot.—Quite right.

Gian.—Monsieur Quite Right, that is for me to decide, not for you.

Phil.—Are you averse to being married?

Gian.—If I could find a husband to my taste——

Phil.—I shall be pleased if he is to your taste—to mine he certainly must be; the fortune I intend for you will make you equal to the best match in Holland.

Gian.—The father of Mademoiselle Costanza says the same.

Phil.—Do you compare Monsieur Riccardo with me? or do you compare yourself to the daughter of a broker? You vex me when you talk so. I will hear no more.

Gian.—But I do not say——

Phil.—I'll hear no more,

(Exit.)

De la Cot.—Ah, my Giannina, our affairs are worse than ever. How much better not to have taken such a step!

Gian.—Who could have foreseen my father would involve himself as he has done?

De la Cot.—I see no remedy but my immediate departure.

Gian.—Such weakness I did not expect.

De la Cot.—Then I may be forced to marry Mademoiselle Costanza.

Gian.—Do so, if you have the heart.

De la Cot.—Or shall the whole mystery be explained?

Gian.—It would be a most unhandsome act, to expose the shame of having contrived such a deception.

De la Cot.—Then do you suggest some plan.

Gian.—All I can say is this: Think no more of going away. As to marrying Mademoiselle Costanza, it is absurd; to discover our plot, preposterous. Resolve, then, on some plan to secure at the same time our love, our reputation, and our happiness.

(Exit.)

De la Cot.—Excellent advice! but among so many things not to be done, where shall we find what is to be done? Alas! nothing remains but absolute despair.

Riccardo refuses his consent to his daughter's marriage, whereupon Philibert urges De la Cotterie to marry the girl without it, or if need be, carry her away to France. But the officer asks:

De la Cot.—With what means? With what money?

Phil.—Take this. Here are a hundred guineas in gold, and four hundred more in notes; these five hundred guineas will serve you for some time; accept them from my friendship. I think I can make the father of the girl return them to me.

De la Cot.—Sir, I am full of confusion—

Phil.—What confuses you? I am astonished at you! You want spirit; you want courage. Go quickly, and do not lose

a moment. May fortune be propitious to you. (Aside.) I am anxious to see Riccardo in a rage.

But instead of going to the house of Costanza's aunt, as Philibert supposes, De la Cotterie marries Giannina. Her father is prevailed on to grant his pardon. Gascoigne is married to Giannina's maid, who has acted as her accomplice, and everything ends to the satisfaction of all parties, except poor Costanza.

The Ostentatious Miser.

The *Ostentatious Miser* was written in French, as were other of Goldoni's plays, and resembles somewhat a modern French comedy of society. At the rise of the curtain, Count Casteldoro, the miser, indulges in a brief soliloquy, after which he unfolds his plans to his valet, Frontino, and his sister, Dorimene.

Count.—At last I am determined to marry. How! I marry! I, who have always avoided expense? I, who have detested all intercourse with ladies! Well, in this case, I am hurried away in my own despite. Ambition has induced me to obtain a title; therefore, should I die without children, my money is lost! and children themselves will but bring trouble! (Calls.) Frontino!

(Enter Frontino.)

Frontino.—Here, sir!

Count.—Hark ye!

Front.—I have found a tailor, sir, as you ordered me; and a tailor of the first notoriety.

Count.—Will he come directly?

Front.—Very soon. He was obliged first to wait on a duke. I was lucky enough to find him at home when he was about to step into his coach.

Count.—His coach?

Front.—Yes, sir.

Count.—His own coach? His own horses?

Front.—Beyond all doubt. A superb carriage, and excellent nags.

Count.—O Lord! He's too rich. Is he in repute?

Front.—In the greatest. He works for the first families in Paris.

Count.—But his honesty?

Front.—On that subject I have nothing to say. But why, Signor Count, did you not employ your own tailor?

Count.—Fie! My own tailor on such an occasion! I have need of several suits; and, as they must be grand, magnificent, and made to perfection, shall I, if any one should ask who is my tailor, shall I answer, "Signor Taccone," whose name nobody knows?

Front.—Then, sir, from what I hear, you are soon to be married?

Count.—So soon that this very day, and in this very house, I am to sign the contract: I have therefore called you to give the necessary orders. On this occasion I shall have a large company to dine with me, and must have such a dinner—in short, brilliant! grand! splendid! Not that I would satiate the indiscreet, or gorge my guests; but I would surprise by an air of grandeur—you know what I mean?

Front.—Yes, sir, tolerably well; but to do all this will not be quite so easy. I must inquire whether the cook——

Count.—No, no, Frontino; I would not have you dependent on the caprice of a cook. Take the direction of everything upon yourself. I know your talents, the readiness of your wit, and your zeal for your master's interest. There is not in the whole world a man like Frontino! You can work miracles; and on such an occasion will surpass yourself.

Front.—(Aside.) Ha! his usual mode. Coaxing me when he wants me; but afterwards——

Count.—Here is a list of the guests whom I have invited. My sister lives in this house, and my future spouse and her mother have the adjoining apartments. Here is a note of the other guests. We shall be thirty at table. Hasten to them

all, and get a positive answer from each, that, in case of refusals, other persons may be invited.

Front.—Thirty guests! Do you know, sir, how much a dinner for thirty will——

Count.—Perfectly; and will employ your discretion to combine economy and magnificence.

Front.—For example, you gave a supper a few nights ago to three gentlemen, and——

Count.—Ay, that was a trifle; at present I would be talked of.

Front.—But this trifling supper you thought so dear——

Count.—Lose no time in useless words.

Front.—You threw the account in my face, and have not yet——

Count.—Here is my sister. Begone!

Front.—(Aside.) O Lord! what will become of me? This time, friend Frontino, by way of recompense, prepare yourself to be kicked out of doors.
(Exit.)

(Enter Dorimene.)

Count.—Good morning, dear sister; how do you do?

Dorimene.—Perfectly well. How are you?

Count.—Never better. Fortunate and happy man! I am to possess a bride of high birth and merit.

Dor.—Then you are determined in favor of Eleonora?

Count.—Aye, sweet sister! she is your relation; you proposed her to me, and I therefore have reason to give her the preference.

Dor.—(Ironically.) Her and her portion of one hundred thousand crowns, with as much more, perhaps, at the death of her mother.

Count.—You will allow, sister, that such conditions are not to be despised.

Dor.—True; but you, who are so——

Count.—I understand you. A man like me, having sacrificed a considerable sum to obtain a title, should have endeavored to marry into an illustrious family. I have thought

much, and combatted long this reigning inclination, but I know the prejudices of the old nobility; I must have paid dearly for the pompous honor of such an alliance.

Dor.—That is not what I wish to say.

Count.—I am determined to marry the charming Eleonora.

Dor.—But if the charming Eleonora should feel no love for you?

Count.—My dear sister, I do not think myself a person to be despised.

Dor.—But inclinations are capricious.

Count.—Has Eleonora told you she cannot love me?

Dor.—She has not precisely told me, but I have great reason to doubt it.

Count.—(To himself, vexed.) This is a little strange.

Dor.—Why are you angry? If you take in ill part—

Count.—No, no; you mistake me. Speak freely and sincerely.

Dor.—You know the confidence you have placed in me. Having discoursed together concerning this family, I wrote to Madame Araminta, inviting her and her daughter to pass a few days at Paris.

Count.—And they have been a fortnight with you. This I know must give trouble, and bring expense; and as you have done it for my sake—I—my duty—my obligations are eternal.

Dor.—By no means, brother. The expense is trifling, and the inconvenience small. I love this family, and beside being related to my husband, am greatly interested in its behalf. Eleonora is the best girl on earth, and her mother is no less respectable. A good heart, economical, and to the most exact economy she unites prudence and regularity of conduct.

Count.—Excellent; and so has been the education of her daughter. But now tell me—

Dor.—Sincerely, brother, in my opinion, Eleonora loves you neither much nor little.

Count.—On what do you found this strange suspicion?

Dor.—I will tell you. When your name is mentioned, she looks down and gives no answer.

Count.—Bashfulness.

Dor.—When she hears or sees you coming, she is in a tremor, and wishes to hide herself.

Count.—At her age that is not extraordinary.

Dor.—When this marriage is mentioned, the tears are in her eyes.

Count.—The tears of a child? Can anything be more equivocal?

Dor.—And though so equivocal and so full of doubt, will you dare to marry her?

Count.—Certainly, without the least difficulty.

Dor.—It seems you love her to distraction.

Count.—I love—I do not know how much.

Dor.—You have scarcely seen her twice.

Count.—Is not that enough to a feeling heart like mine?

Dor.—Ah, brother, I know you.

Count.—Your penetration is a little too quick.

Dor.—I do not wish that you should hereafter have to reproach me.

Count.—Yonder is Frontino.

Dor.—If you have business—

Count.—(With affected kindness.) Will you go?

Dor.—We shall meet again soon. I only wish you to think a little on what I have said, and before you marry—

Count.—Fear nothing, dear sister. Do me the pleasure to dine with me to-day. I will send to invite Madame Aramintâ and her daughter. We shall have many guests. The notary will be here after dinner, and the contract will be signed.

Dor.—To-day?

Count.—No doubt: Madame Araminta has pledged her word.

Dor.—(Ironically.) I give you joy. (Aside.) I will never suffer Eleonora to sacrifice herself for my sake. If I could but truly understand her heart—I will try. (Exit.)

In the second act Dorimene finds that Eleonora is not disposed to bestow her hand on Casteldoro, and the act concludes with a scene between the count and Araminta, Eleonora's mother. The count has meanwhile made a present of diamonds to Eleonora.

Count.—Well, Madame, Eleonora?

Araminta.—All, I hope, will be well.

Count.—Then I shall be happy; for health should be our first care. I have sent round to the guests, with an invitation to supper this evening.

Aram.—Thirty persons at supper!

Count.—I hope so, madame.

Aram.—Permit me to speak openly, and tell you all I think.

Count.—You cannot give me greater pleasure.

Aram.—Is it not extreme folly to assemble thirty persons, twenty of whom, at least, will make a jest of you?

Count.—A jest of me?

Aram.—Beyond all doubt. Do not think that I am avaricious; thank heaven, that is not my defect; but I cannot endure to see money squandered.

Count.—But on such a day, and under such circumstances.

Aram.—Are they your relatives whom you have invited?

Count.—By no means. A select company; the nobility! the literati! the magistracy! all persons of distinction.

Aram.—Worse and worse! Vanity, ostentation, folly! My good friend, you do not know the value of money.

Count.—(Smiles.) I do not know the value of money!

Aram.—Alas, you do not! Your sister made me believe you were economical; had I known the truth, I should never have married my daughter to a spendthrift.

Count.—So you think me a spendthrift!

Aram.—I first perceived it by the considerable sum you

threw away in the purchase of a title; which sacrifice to vanity has no beneficial end.

Count.—How? Are you not aware the rank I have acquired will impress a character of respect on myself, your daughter, and our descendants?

Aram.—Quite the reverse. I would have rather given my daughter to you as Signor Anselmo Colombani, a well-known merchant, than to the Count of Casteldoro, a newly-made nobleman.

Count.—But, madame——

Aram.—Your ancestors have saved what you will scatter.

Count.—Scatter! I! You are mistaken, madame; you do not know me.

Aram.—Oh yes, yes. I saw the manner in which, without any knowledge of diamonds, or asking the least advice, you were led away by the jeweler.

Count.—Oh, with respect to the diamonds——

Aram.—Oh, aye! I know your answer. They are to decorate the Countess of Casteldoro. And who is the Countess of Casteldoro? My daughter, signor, has been well educated, but with no such expectations. Everything has been done in abundance that could contribute to convenience, decency, and information; but nothing to pomp and vanity. The ornaments of my daughter will ever be modesty, obedience, and that self-respect which she could not but acquire from such an education.

Count.—But, madame——

Aram.—But, signor—I ask your pardon—perhaps you may think me too warm; but I see you hurried into a gulf of expense that makes me tremble. My daughter's happiness is concerned; I give her a hundred thousand crowns in marriage.

Count.—Am I not able to settle an equal sum upon her?

Aram.—Yes, at present. But wealth will diminish; and especially when we have the vanity to be profuse, grand and magnificent.

Count.—I once more assure you, madame, you do not know me.

Aram.—Signor, had you been a different person, I had conceived an excellent plan. My annual income is five and twenty thousand livres; I might have lived with you and my daughter, and the two families might have been one; but, at present, heaven prevent me from such a step!

Count.—Pray hear me. You mistake my character. Few people, indeed, understand economy as well as I do, as you will soon be convinced. I willingly close with your proposal, and——

Aram.—By no means! You try in vain to persuade me against conviction. Respecting my daughter—I have promised—we shall see—but for myself it is different. Not all the gold on earth should induce me to make such an arrangement with a man who does not know the use of money, but lets it slip through his fingers faster than flour through a sieve.

Count.—I never imagined I should pass for a prodigal.

But Eleonora is not for the count; she marries instead the chevalier del Bosco, son of a marquis who wins the hand of Araminta, on condition that she has carte blanche in the management of his estate. At the supper the notary appears, and Casteldoro, who had expected to announce his own marriage, invites his guests to witness the signing of a contract between the chevalier and Eleonora.

In an analysis of Goldoni's comedies it will be noticed how small is the share of fine feelings which they display. Indeed, the drama of this author is anything but sentimental. His heroes and heroines are not those of romance; he gives them their full share of human foibles, and delights to make us laugh at their expense; displaying the egotism lurking in their generosity, the interested nature of their friendship, the envy mingled with their admiration, and throughout all, the dull,

calculating and vulgar part of human nature. This he accomplishes with considerable address and wit, and with no slight knowledge of dramatic effect. He strongly excites our laughter, at the same time that we applaud the natural turn of the dialogue and of the characters. But this is not the sole object of comedy; for in real productions of art, something of a more ideal character is required, and where nothing of this elevated description appears in a comedy, we soon become weary of the narrow views and despicable opinions peculiar to the prosaic class. We begin to feel the want of a species of interest which we do not find, and to this aspiration after nobler sentiments and more grateful feelings may be attributed the revival of sentimental comedy, of domestic tragedy, of tragi-comedy, the melodrama and romantic comedy upon the stage of every nation.

With all his shortcomings, Goldoni has been universally allowed by the people of Italy to be the great master of the comic stage, and his productions, identified as they are with the character and manners of the nation for which they are written, were always received with enthusiastic applause. Frequently was the representation of his plays interrupted by repeated cries of "Gran Goldoni," which was caught up and reëchoed through all parts of the theatre. Yet his merits, however eminent in the natural and faithful delineation of manners, and in the strain of gayety that runs throughout, by no means convey the idea of grandeur or of transcendent genius. Goldoni was extremely provoked to find his pieces made a subject of parody by Count Gozzi,

and more so that these attempts had been received by the public with very generous applause, though bestowed less, perhaps, on the happiness of the parody than on the fantastic productions in which it was contained. This gave rise to a literary quarrel, attended by two very remarkable circumstances. Goldoni became irritated to such a degree as to lead him to abandon his native country; Gozzi introduced a new style of comedy, which for a time almost superseded the drama of his rival.

Gozzi.

The ascendancy of Carlo Gozzi is limited to the four brilliant years in which he carried all before him on the Venetian stage by his *fiabe*, or dramatized fairy tales, composed in the spirit of the *Commedia dell'arte*, but with a regular plot, capable of exciting strong interest. Goldoni, as the restorer of true comedy, had denounced the buffooneries of the old *Commedia dell'arte*, and Gozzi, who had himself cultivated that form, and whose preference for it was increased by his misunderstanding with Goldoni, determined to show its capabilities, and at the same time to ridicule his rivals, Goldoni and Chiari.

The Three Oranges.

In 1761 Gozzi placed in the hands of a company of players his dramatic sketch entitled the *Three Oranges*, leaving the subordinate parts to be filled in by the humor and imagination for which these actors were famous. Inspired by personal dislike for Goldoni and

Chiari, the objects of the parody, they played it with the utmost spirit. Its success was instantaneous, and fairly crushed Gozzi's rivals by the satire of the burlesque, as where the long journeys which Chiari's personages are supposed to perform, in the space of a single act, are ridiculed by Tartaglia and Truffaldino being propelled two thousand leagues by the devil with a pair of bellows, and then "sprawling on the grass at the sudden cessation of the favoring gale." The principal scene is where Tartaglia, after recovering from a long fit of melancholy, goes in quest of the three oranges preserved in the castle of the fairy Creonta. The fairy summons her dog, and tells him to "go, bite the thief who stole my oranges;" but the dog replies: "Why should I bite him? He gave me plenty to eat, while you have kept me here for months and years, dying of hunger." The fairy then turns to the rope at the well: "Rope, bind the thief who stole my oranges." But the rope answers: "Why should I bind him who hung me in the sun to dry, while you have left me for months and years to moulder in a corner?" Finally, the fairy bids the iron gate of the castle to "crush the thief who stole my oranges." But, says the gate: "Why should I crush him who has oiled me, while you have left me so long to rust?" During this dialogue the audience was listening in rapt attention and loudly applauding a tale known to everyone before. But the climax was reached when, Truffaldino cutting two of the oranges, there stepped forth two beautiful princesses, who very soon died of thirst. As Tartaglia cuts the remaining orange by the side of a fountain a third

princess steps forth, and to her he hastens to give something to drink; for it appears that, after many more adventures, she is destined to become his wife. Thereupon she is transformed into a dove before the eyes of the audience, and it is some time before she regains her natural shape. Not least among the triumphs of the play was that it drove Goldoni out of Venice.

The Fairy Drama.

Observing the use that might be made of the love of the marvellous, of deceptions and metamorphoses accomplished on the stage, Gozzi devoted himself in earnest to the new species of drama which he had created, selecting for the stage all the fairy tales that appeared to him most likely to produce a brilliant effect. He dramatized and gave them to the public, accompanied with such magnificence of decoration and equipment as won the liveliest applause, while the humor of the actors, and the animation which the author threw into these time-worn fictions, gave to them all the effect of tragi-comedy. In many of these fantastic creations Gozzi displayed the qualities both of a poet and a humorist, as in *Zobeide*, *The Lady Serpent*, *The Blue Monster*, *The Green Bird*, *The King of the Genii*, and others. He avoided personal satire, the better to sustain the legendary portion of his subject. He seems to have imbibed the true spirit of fairy stories, and if his plays show little resemblance to nature, they at least preserve the sort of probability we can expect in this form of drama. He divided the performances into

acts and scenes, writing in iambic verse the more serious parts, and trusted for extemporization only the characters in mask—harlequin, pantaloon and the rest. The scenes were laid in the Orient, where the marvelous needs only to be limited by the author's imagination, and the events are represented as occurring in modern times, in order to permit allusions to the manners, and especially the failings, of his contemporaries.

The more serious personages were usually placed in very critical circumstances, for the purpose of creating sufficient interest and curiosity, sometimes in the adventures and sometimes in the characters themselves. For the most part, interest is kept alive by one astonishing incident crowded upon another, keeping the audience always in a state of surprise and curiosity.

As an instance, may be mentioned the *Zobeide*, where a princess is carried off by a wicked enchanter, who, imposing upon her by his magic art, has inspired her with a passion for him. This enchanter, King Sinadab, never retains the same wife longer than forty days, after which he transforms her into a heifer, and carries off another, those who resist him being tormented in a dismal cavern with all the cruelties he can inflict. *Zobeide* has already reached the fortieth day, and Sinadab is resolved to destroy her. But, meanwhile, she has made an impression on the heart of Abdalac, the high priest, who is no less powerful as a magician than the king himself, and endeavors to make the infernal incantations of the latter recoil upon his own head. He reveals to *Zobeide* the character of her husband, and the fate which is in store for her. He shows her, among the

wretched prisoners in the cavern, her own sister and her half-sister, and the scene represented on the stage strongly resembles Dante's hell. One of these unfortunates is seen pacing the winding cavern with her head in her hand, suspended by the hair; at the bosom of another serpents are perpetually gnawing; a third is half metamorphosed into a monster, and all exclaim with horror against the cruelty of Sinadab. No longer under delusion, Zobeide tears the image of the king from her heart, but in order to escape his fury she is obliged to conceal from him the discovery she has made. Her father and brother arrive, with an army, for her rescue; when Sinadab, by a new enchantment, so far changes their appearance that, ignorant of each other's identity, they engage in single combat, and the father is killed by his own son. Zobeide still disguises her feelings, and is invited by Sinadab to partake of a collation, where he proposes to give her the fatal cake which is to transform her into a heifer. But she adroitly substitutes one of the cakes for another, and Sinadab himself is now transformed into a monster, whereupon Abdalac avails himself of the opportunity to break all his enchantments and to restore his captives to liberty.

It does not appear that Gozzi's plays were ever acted outside of Venice; nor do they, in truth, represent the national spirit of the Italian people. They almost seem to be of German rather than Italian origin, and, indeed, they have been repeatedly published and received with enthusiasm by the German people. Many of his pieces were translated, and acquired for Gozzi a reputation which has ever since made his name popular in Ger-

many. In Italy, however, the taste for fairy fictions appears to have spread no further than Venice, for elsewhere they were neither to be met with in the peasant's hut nor in the nursery. Gozzi's theatrical reputation continued for ten or fifteen years; but, while he obtained the applause of the people, all the men of letters attacked him with the utmost virulence and animosity. They ridiculed his fables, his transformations and miracles, and exposed the utter absurdity of the fairy tales upon which they were founded. Gozzi yielded so far to the outcry raised against him that by degrees he relinquished the kind of drama which he had adopted. He substituted romance in the place of the marvellous, and he succeeded in effecting, by human causes, a mixture of heroism and perfidy, those revolutions which are intended to gratify curiosity and to surprise the spectators. A fresh host of critics attempted to denounce this union of sentiment and buffoonery, of levity and gayety, of verse and prose; and very good reasons may certainly be alleged both in favor of and against a species of innovation which takes Gozzi out of the sphere of the imaginative arts. After four years of uninterrupted success he retired from the Italian stage, fearing to tire the public taste, and conscious, perhaps, that he had exhausted his vein. But his dramatic career was not yet ended, for in later years he composed tragedies, in which the comic element was largely introduced as in Shakespeare's plays, and when this mixture was condemned by the critics, his efforts were thenceforth chiefly devoted to adaptations from the Spanish. Throughout his career Gozzi had been a persistent

enemy of the imitation of French models which Goldoni brought into favor in Italy.

Albergati.

In order to encourage the drama, the duke of Parma proposed prizes for the best dramatic compositions, and at the annual meetings, which began about 1770, and were continued until 1778, several pieces of a superior character appeared, among which those of the marchese Albergati Capacelli, a Bolognese, were most in favor, one of these, entitled *The Prisoner*, winning the laurel crown in 1774. The peculiar qualities of Albergati's dramas, which are somewhat numerous, are the versatility, ease and variety which are everywhere observable, united to wit and much delicacy of sentiment. The play of *The Prisoner* is in five acts, and is written in verse. The interest turns upon the affection of a man of rank for a lady wanting the advantage of birth, and the sufferings which they experience in consequence of the undue exercise of parental authority. Albergati was one of the first writers in Italy who selected this incident for dramatic use, and he treated it with equal energy and sensibility. It was not long before he displayed talents, no less conspicuous, in pure comedy. A man of the world and conversant with the best society which Italy afforded, he employed the opportunities he thus enjoyed to observe life and to describe it with impartiality and truth. His *Ciarlatore Maldicente*, or *The Malicious Busybody*, is quite worthy of Goldoni in the singular correctness of its characters and in the spirit of

the dialogue, while in point of humor and elegance of style it may, perhaps, be pronounced superior.

Many pieces that may be classed as farce are from the pen of the same author, and are justly ranked among the most amusing productions of which the Italian theatre can boast. In these, Albergati had the art of uniting to national humor, and to the buffoonery of the old comedy, the elegance of manners peculiar to good society. The most successful, perhaps, was one entitled *Convulsions*, in which Albergati took occasion to ridicule those affected disorders of the nerves so fashionably prevalent about the end of the eighteenth century, and succeeded in deterring the voluntary victims from making them the pretence for further usurpation of authority over their husbands and their lovers; thus freeing the people of Italy from the new yoke with which they were threatened. Albergati was passionately devoted to the study of the drama, and was one of the founders of the theatre at Bologna, instituted with the view of introducing a more correct style of declamation among the players, by public specimens of elocution, in which his own histrionic talents were employed in throwing new light on the subject of dramatic composition. He distinguished himself, also, by his critical taste and acquirements, as appears from the remarks which he made upon his own works, and from his correspondence with Alfieri; and he undoubtedly deserves to be numbered among those who, without possessing any great degree of genius, contributed most to the improvement of the Italian theatre.

In consequence of the increasing influence of French

taste and of the superficial philosophy so much in repute toward the end of the eighteenth century, the drama of Italy was wholly deprived of its original character. The principles avowed by the French school had at first found no favor in Italy; they had been transferred thither without being applied or understood, and were by no means agreeable to the feelings and opinions of the people. The disciples of the new philosophy proposed to substitute idle declamation, and the most futile arguments and opinions, in place of the ancient prejudices, which they flattered themselves they had exploded. The plays of Beaumarchais, of Diderot and Mercier, imbued with the modish spirit of this philosophy, made a great impression upon the Italians; and the writers who appeared near the close of the century universally endeavored to imitate them.

Avelloni.

Francesco Antonio Avelloni, of Venice, surnamed II Poetino, procured for himself a high reputation for comic wit, for which he was chiefly indebted to the parts borrowed from Beaumarchais. He directed the ridicule of the lower orders of the people against their superiors in rank, making philosophers of lacqueys, and exposing the various abuses of the established order of things to the public eye. The character of Cianni, in his *Magic Lantern*, seems to be formed upon the model of *Figaro*; but Avelloni is very far from displaying the wit and spirit which we meet with in Beaumarchais. Himself a comic actor, and as ignorant as the rest of

his profession in Italy, Avelloni falls into egregious errors whenever he ventures to lay the scene of the play beyond the circle of his own limited experience. The outline of his characters is good, and his dialogue excels in the qualities of nature, of vivacity and sometimes of wit. His choleric personages are admirably brought out, and he displays considerable skill in the humorous description of the passion of anger in all its varieties.

Gualzetti.

Of the sentimental pieces which attracted the greatest applause in Italy, several were borrowed from French, English and German romances. A new Werter appeared in the creation of Anton Simone Sografi, a writer of some repute; and a Neapolitan, of the name of Gualzetti, produced a series of three dramas founded on the history of the count de Comminges. Few pieces have been more frequently played, or received with greater pleasure on the Italian stage than these historical dramas. The second, entitled *Adelaide Married*, was a particular favorite, though subject to those peculiar defects of which the sentimental school has been long accused—defects arising out of a total ignorance of the national manners of other countries and of the laws of true honor. The count de Comminges contrives to introduce himself into the house of a lady of whom he is enamored, and, without seeing her, engages himself as a painter in the service of the marquis of Benavides, her husband, submitting to the greatest indignities, falling upon his knees when he is threatened with chas-

tisement, and begging his master will not, by dismissing him, deprive him of all hope of obtaining his bread.

Pamela is another story which has furnished the Italian dramatists with new materials for comedy, and Goldoni has drawn from it three successive plays, while Chiari and Greppi each produced three connected dramas, of one of which the scene is laid throughout in England. Tom Jones and Clarissa have also figured upon the Italian boards, as well as an innumerable list whose pretensions to English names and English manners would be quite as admissible among natives of China or Japan. The count of Belphegor, originally from the pen of Machiavelli, has furnished a tolerably good comedy; but it was here thought advisable to lay the scene in a country where such personages could be presumed to live at ease, free from the importunities of magistrates and priests. Geneva was therefore fixed upon; and it is at Geneva that the devil is supposed to arrive, provided with ample recommendations to the prince of the city; that he is likewise supposed to enter into the holy estate of matrimony, and, driven to despair by the bitter temper of his lady, to return to his ancient residence below.

Federici.

One of the most distinguished farce writers of Italy was Camillo Federici, a Piedmontese actor, who, it is said, owed his education to the Jesuits. He made many long tours with his company, in the course of which he obtained some acquaintance with the German theatre, more particularly with the drama of Kotzebue, many

of whose pieces he attempted to naturalize in Italy, with others from the French. But he rarely excites our laughter by his wit, or awakens our sympathy by his pathos. The chief attraction consists in the force of his incidents and situations. The dialogue is, for the most part, dull and monotonous, without being natural; the sarcasm is severe, and when he aims at sentiment he is often pedantic or affected. His plots, however, are frequently striking and new; and, in the conduct of his romance, the interest depends chiefly upon curiosity and upon humorous and unexpected surprises. One of the most popular of his productions is *The Pretended Men of Worth*, the subject of which, however, is a little stale. It is that of a sovereign arriving unexpectedly in one of the cities lately added to his empire to observe, incognito, the conduct of his officers, discovering their perfidy and selfishness, and rewarding each according to his deserts. Residing in a country divided into a number of sovereign duchies, Federici selected for his hero the duke of Burgundy, whom he represents as residing at Dijon, wholly occupied with the cares of state and with the promotion of his subjects' welfare. This hero, apparently of a most pacific disposition, is, we are surprised to find, no other than Charles the Bold. Federici appears to have had a very limited acquaintance with the history of other times and nations, for which we could have readily pardoned him if he had displayed a more intimate knowledge of the human heart. But his pretended men of worth are surely the most impudent rogues ever brought forward upon the stage. Besides having made all these villains boastful

and imprudent, Federici has fallen into the error of drawing the whole of his characters in chiaroscuro. They are all light or all shade; we find only very atrocious crimes or the most shining virtues. Thus seven monsters of iniquity and four perfect characters are contrasted, and among the last is a peasant whose good qualities are even more marvellous than the vices of the others. Here we behold good faith without a taint of suspicion, generosity beyond bounds and all the cardinal virtues carried to perfection. The sovereign, with the character ascribed to that rank by comic authors, is a model of perfect justice, of elevation of mind and of zeal in the cause of righteousness. At the conclusion he disposes of everything in a very summary and arbitrary manner, and the fortunes, the liberty and the lives of all personages concerned are regulated according to his good will and pleasure, and to the infinite satisfaction of the audience.

Rossi.

The popular admiration of plays of the Federici type long maintained its ground in Italy among those classes who are accustomed to feel no sort of interest in the regular drama, and who love to indulge strong emotions without asking themselves in what manner they are produced. But authors and critics of the better class set themselves against the sentimental style of comedy; many devoting their talents, perhaps with less success, but certainly with more of merit, to the species which Goldoni introduced on the Italian stage. Among

the most deserving was Gherardo di Rossi, a Roman playwright, who presented the public with four volumes of comedies and many very pleasing pieces in verse. In the former he has succeeded in giving a correct description of the characters and manners of his nation, as well as in catching the peculiar faults and foibles of the society in which he lived. We everywhere trace the hand of a man of taste, and of one possessing a familiar acquaintance with the world. In liveliness of imagination and in elegance of language he far surpassed his predecessors, but his satire has too much severity to pass for humor, and his characters are either too mean or too vicious to deserve our sympathy. To this must be attributed the little popularity which has attended his productions, although they discover greater powers of imagination and wit than those of many other comic writers.

Giraud.

Count Giraud, also a Roman, but of French extraction, pursued the same career in the line of true comedy. His dramatic talents display a curious combination of the qualities peculiar to the two nations to which he owes his birth, his productions exhibiting as much of Italian good nature as of the finesse of the French. His plots are conducted with a spirit and rapidity peculiar to the people of the South, while his characters, in the midst of the most ridiculous situations, always preserve a certain dignity with which French taste can never altogether dispense. Giraud, though his works were produced in the nineteenth cen-

ture, belongs to the school of Rossi and his contemporaries. His productions were received with eagerness by managers and audiences, even by such as refused to render justice to the merits of Rossi. Indeed, they were for a time almost the only real comedies on the Italian stage, affording an agreeable relief to the monotonous sentiment of other dramatists.

Pindemonti.

Still another author whose talents, neither of a strictly comic nor tragic order, were frequently employed for the theatres of Italy, was the marchese Giovanni Pindemonti, a native of Verona, but who first won fame at Milan. His chief productions consisted of four volumes of *Dramatic Compositions*, as he was pleased to style them, in order to avoid the frowns of criticism which might have assailed them under the title of tragedies; yet more than one of these have attained a reputation seldom awarded even to the finest of tragedies. Pindemonti is a complete master of dramatic effect; he seizes the imagination by the splendor of his imagery; he animates and takes possession of the stage, and he is, in almost every sense, the reverse of his great contemporary, Alfieri, whose productions will form the subject of the two following chapters. Alfieri sought to restore tragedy to its simplest elements of form and verse, keeping only one object in view, while Pindemonti strove to adorn it with circumstantial and outward pomp, with everything that can captivate the senses, and with such variety and number

of characters as contribute to render our impressions most complete. His more tender and impassioned feelings are delineated with much energy and truth, while he attempts to give expression to that love of civil and religious liberty of which he had been the friend and the martyr under the old government by presenting it with new life upon the stage. In this last point, however, he is somewhat verbose and declamatory, diverging into tedious and repeated speeches, which are not sufficiently charged with matter, nor very much to the point. The variety of objects which he embraces required more poetical powers to give them a picturesque effect, and in this, as well as in the harmony of his numbers, he is deficient, while marks of haste and obscurity, owing as much to extreme conciseness as to faulty construction, must be considered among the defects of this author; but these are amply redeemed by the interest infused into his subject, and by the originality of mind which led him to pursue a course before unknown to the Italians.

Ginevra of Scotland.

No single production of Pindemonti seems to have attained greater celebrity than his *Ginevra of Scotland*, borrowed from Ariosto. It exhibits a striking similarity to the *Tancred* of Voltaire, containing all the elements of chivalry belonging to the olden times. The revolting character of Polinesso, who introduces himself into the chamber of Ginevra, so as to be seen by Ariodante, whom he has placed in view, for the purpose of defam-

ing the character of that princess, and the meanness of Dalinda, who receives, in the dress of her mistress, the visit of Polinesso, and thus promotes the conspiracy, give rise only to feelings of disgust. The whole plot is altogether too improbable, while Rinaldo's protracted speeches give an air of tameness and frigidity to the conclusion of the piece. A few scattered scenes and incidents, however, are fraught with deep tragic interest and beauty, and we cannot fail to be struck with the character of Ginevra throughout the whole of the fourth act. Condemned and abandoned to her fate under the most suspicious appearances, she still asserts a pride and purity of innocence which support her father and dissipate all his fears. Ariodante arrives, in the same manner as Tancred, in the quality of her champion, clad in black armor which completely conceals him from view. The accused lady is then left alone with her true knight, who, though fully convinced of her guilt, cannot resist coming forward in her behalf, consoling himself only with the thought of dying for her.

Ginevra.—Since thou hast resolved
Nobly to risk thy name in my behalf,
Thou art, I trust, persuaded of the wrong,
False, shameless wrong, done to my virgin fame:
Never did lance grace juster cause than mine,
In champion's hand, and if Heaven do, indeed,
Prosper its righteous judgments in the strength
Of battling heroes, know thou shalt come forth
A wreathed conqueror!

Ariodante.—(Aside.) Ye gods! what boldness!

Ginev.— But 'tis idle here
To give such hopes a tongue. Now, noble sir,

Since ancient custom so doth authorize,
 Let me avail me of these moments granted,
 Meekly to beg one boon of my protector.

Ariod.—Say on.

Ginev.—I know the order of the king, my father,
 Doth yield me up a guerdon to the conqueror;
 Thine shall I be, so thou wipe off the stain,
 The undeserved aspersion of mine honor.
 I know, alas! thou may'st enforce thy wishes;
 But oh! if thou be generous as thou seemest,
 By all the warmest prayers by woman utter'd
 In sorest need, I do beseech thee pause,
 And spare what is thine own. Take wealth, take honors,
 All the rich dower with which my royal father
 Hath portion'd me; but leave my wretched self
 Freely to weep; for know, I could not love thee.

Ariod.—How!

Ginev.— Nay, be not offended!

Ariod.—(Aside.) Shameless! Yet,
 Yet loves she Polinesso. Listen, lady;
 Know you what 'tis to love?

Ginev.—Alas, I do!

Ariod.—Then wherefore doth your guilty lover loiter?
 Why leaps not forth his lance in thy defence,
 For whom thou erred'st and weep'st?

Ginev.—Oh God! he cannot!
 Lowly he lies in the wide waters buried,
 A wretched prey to monsters of the deep;
 Yet is there now a lofty spirit beaming
 From out those mortal spoils, in the blest heavens,
 Where all my love is garner'd. But, perhaps,
 The fame of youthful years, the gallant bearing
 Of his proud country's shield, of Ariodante,
 O worshipped name, sole care and sole delight,
 Are all unknown to you. Now, hark! He rush'd
 And madly plunged into the waves. They say—
 I know not—but they say it was for me.
 As Heaven shall judge my soul, I do aver

I was not false—no! even in thought, I was not
False to his love. Oh, you would pity me,
Did you but know the mingled love and grief
That tear my heart, whose unstaunched wounds still
bleed

With bitter memories of that one loved name,
Round which my bounden fealty clings till death.
Yet am I grateful for the generous aid
Afforded, for the sake of my fair fame,
Far more than life, worse than a burden now.
Should other means be wanting, yet a life
Of living death will kill, though lingering long.
Then, kind as brave, complete your glorious task;
Relieve my woes; snatch me from infamy!
Oh, fight and conquer! Then, most merciful,
Plunge your victorious sword into my bosom.

Ariod.—(Aside.) Eternal Heaven, though certain of her guilt,
What soul-subduing words! They look like truth,
And wherefore should she feign them to a stranger?

Ginev.—(Aside.) What is he murmuring?

Ariod.—(Aside.) It is most strange.

My heart is wrung with woe.—*Ginevra!*

Ginev.—Say

You grant my prayer—one prayer, for all my woes;
Leave me but be free!

Ariod.—'Tis granted—all is granted.

Ginev.—I thought no less. You have a noble heart,
And nobly have you done! Thus let me kneel
Low at your feet.

Ariod.—No, rise, *Ginevra!* Tell me,
Can you be innocent? Now, to your champion
Unfold your inmost mind!

Ginev.—You too! My champion—
Do you too doubt me?

Ariod.—O ye gods! what rage!
What anguish! (Aside.) Hark! who gave a cavalier,
At night, the meeting at her chamber windows?
Was it *Ginevra?*

Ginev.—May Heaven's lightnings strike me
To dust, if ever I did quit my couch
A moment, where I laid my virgin limbs.

Ariod.—I do believe her; for if this be falsehood,
There is no truth. Yet have I not had proofs?
Such proofs? Oh, misery! (*Aside.*) And do you say
You loved but Ariodante?

Ginev.—As alive,
I loved him always, so I love him dead.

Ariod.—Ungrateful! No!

Ginev.—What dost thou say?

Ariod.—Ye gods!
I shall betray myself; I cannot bear it;
'Tis death, or something worse than death! (*Aside.*)
Enchantress,
Thy spells are on me. I would disbelieve
What I have seen.

Ginev.—What is't that troubles you?
Why speak you thus?—Why cast such terrible looks
Upon me now, from those stern steel-clad brows?
Indeed, you fright me. Wherefore do you groan,
As from your inmost spirit, and stifle sighs
That seem to shake your soul? Speak!

Ariod.—It is nothing.
Nay, what you've asked I granted. Leave me now.

Ginev.—How can I leave th' asserter of my honor?

Ariod.—Away, away! you know not what you do:
Your sight is death to me.

Ginev.—Alas, what say you!
What phantom flits before me—things long past?
If dead things come to life—what hope? what joy?
That voice—those looks! Oh! tell me, noble warrior,
Art thou unhappy, like myself?

Ariod.—I am.

Ginev.—I do beseech you, let me now behold
Your features. Oh, for pity!

Ariod.—No, you shall not,

Till death hath waved his pallid ensigns o'er them,
When battle's done.

Ginev.—Are these your hopes of conquest?

Ariod.—Nay, I will fight; but victory crowns the just!
How may I conquer?

Ginev.—In the righteous cause!

Ariod.—I—no, I cannot.—What say'st thou? she trembles!

Ginev.—The innocent tremble not.

Ariod.—I am——

Ginev.—Who are you?

Quickly! quickly tell me!

Ariod.—I refuse no longer;

Ginevra, you will have it. Know——

(A trumpet sounds.)

Ginev.—That sound!

Ariod.—I hear—I come! Ginevra, fare you well!

To battle and to death.

It was the chief object of Pindemonti to place before his audiences the proud history of their country and to infuse fresh spirit into the drama of Italy by engrafting upon it the loftier character and more heroic manners of the middle ages.

The Auto Da Fé.

Pindemonti wrote also dramas founded on ancient classical subjects, most of them original and all treated with strong inventive power. But that which to Italy was most striking and new, as a stage representation, was the *Adelina e Roberto*, or the *Auto da Fé*, in which the assertion of religious liberty and the hatred of the dread tribunal of the Inquisition were clothed in words

that fell strangely in the Italian tongue upon Italian ears. The scene is laid at Brille, in the Low Countries, and under the government of the duke of Alva. The chief characters are Roberto de Tournay, condemned for two years to the dungeons of the Inquisition; Adeline, his wife, and his father-in-law, both arrested as guilty of heresy, merely for expressing compassion for Roberto. The bishop of Brille is likewise introduced, and tries to save them; but his efforts only compromise his own safety. There are also the members of the Inquisition, with all their paraphernalia of office. The scene, almost throughout, is in the dungeons of the "Holy Office," where the trials and all the preparations for torture are described with a realism that makes the blood run cold. The unrelenting sternness of the grand inquisitor and the milder character of the grand vicar are not painted in the colors of hypocrisy, but as though they were possessed with all the rage and cruelty of a blind fanaticism. Poetry is despoiled of her sweetest graces to give a more terrific expression of truth to the horrors of religious persecution. Indeed, we sup full of horrors, even to a point beyond what is admissible on the stage. The victims appear under condemnation; they arrive at the place of execution; the fagots are in readiness; the dreadful malediction is pronounced, and they are about to be delivered to the flames when the soldiers of the prince of Orange suddenly appear and restore the sufferers to liberty and life.

IV.

Alfieri.

During the eighteenth century, as we have shown, comedy had made very considerable progress in Italy. Among authors who wrote for the stage were several men of genius and not a few of more than mediocre ability, who gave to the theatre plays containing all the old Italian gayety. Tragedy, on the other hand, had made no perceptible advance. With the exception of Maffei's *Merope*, Italy had hardly produced a single play which was not forgotten a few months after its first appearance. So scarce, indeed, were serious dramas that managers reverted to the operas of Metastasio, which they presented without the music, for their text, partly on account of its length, was no longer suitable for musical composers. Yet Metastasio was still the poet of the people, and the crowded audiences which came to hear his plays, although they knew them already by heart, received them with undiminished enthusiasm. With women, and especially those of the higher class, he was especially popular; for they saw that his heroism had its origin in love, and that he gave a pure and noble direction to the tender passion. By

statesmen and moralists he was charged with exercising a pernicious influence on the character and morals of the people; but Metastasio did not write for statesmen and moralists.

Nevertheless, there were many who fully perceived the errors of Metastasio, who despised his effeminacy, who ridiculed his stage effects, his suspended daggers, his love confidants, and all the factitious system which he had introduced on the stage. Foremost among them was Count Vittorio Alfieri, the greatest tragic and satiric writer of his age.

Career and Character.

Alfieri was a native of Piedmont, whose people the Italians regarded very much as the Greeks of Philip's day regarded the Macedonians. He resembled rather an Englishman than a native of Italy, one of the haughty, eccentric, whimsical but generous type which is still accepted on the Continent as the embodiment of British national character. Of patrician birth, he was strongly republican in sentiment; an aristocrat, but with the strongest yearning for national liberty, he was somewhat of the mould of Algernon Sidney or Savage Landor; with a most disinterested love of country, yet arrogant, exacting and domineering; loving his fellow-men, yet always quarrelling with them. The *Autobiography* of Alfieri, or as it is more often termed, his *Confessions*, is one of the most interesting and also one of the most sincere works in all this class of literature. Judged by other accounts of his life and character, it "extenuates

nothing, nor sets down aught in malice." The picture is that of a man continually under the influence of pride and discontent, but one whom pride and discontent stimulate to lofty endeavor and noble actions. Vivid, indeed, is the description of his self-contempt for his wasted youth and his ignorance of the Italian language, the dialect of Piedmont being then the worst of all provincial jargons. Very instructive, also, are the details of his self-education in the dramatic art. The psychological portions are relieved by stories of his extensive travels, his numerous adventures, and his love affairs, some of which were not a little romantic—for however austere the drama of Alfieri, such was not his character in private life. In London, in 1772, he fought a duel, unattended by seconds, with the injured husband of Lady Ligonier, and after wounding him in the right arm returned at once to the theatre from which he had been summoned to the fray. Another adventure in Milan was rather whimsical than romantic; for, convinced of the worthlessness of his siren, he ordered himself to be bound to his chair until the craving for her company had passed away.

Alfieri's third escapade, which became world-famous, was the rescue of Louise von Stolberg, countess of Albany, from the drunken husband who maltreated her, Charles Edward Stuart, the pretender to the British crown. The attachment of Alfieri to the countess was no doubt sincere, as also was her own—at least during the time when he was the only resource she had in the world. The intimacy was at first platonic, and might have continued so but for the extreme brutality

of her husband, which compelled the countess, by Alfieri's contrivance, to take refuge in a convent, where she saw neither husband nor lover. Presently, however, the pretender's brother offered an asylum in a Roman palace, where the intimacy—no longer platonic—was renewed. After being legally separated by the king of Sweden, she removed to Alsace and later to Paris, where, Alfieri joining her, they lived together as man and wife until driven from France by the storms of the revolution. Their last days were spent at Florence, and here, while writing plays, Alfieri died in 1803 from the effects of overwork coupled with his extremely ascetic mode of life. It is said by some that he was privately married to the countess, but of this there is no reliable evidence. She honored him with a monument, sculptured by Canova, though it would seem to have been rather in honor of herself; for her own figure stands out in the boldest prominence, while Alfieri appears only as a medallion head in profile.

Influence on Italian Drama.

It is, in truth, remarkable that a Piedmontese, who found even more difficulty in studying classical Italian than Napoleon in learning French, and who possessed few qualities that were distinctly national, should have been the first one to give new life to the national spirit of Italy. Yet this he unquestionably did. He possessed, in an eminent degree, what was deplorably lacking in the golden age of Italian literature—a passion for freedom and a hatred of tyranny which impart to

his works, however remote their subject from modern times, an air of indignant protest against the subjection and degradation of his country. In this feeling, as well as in his haughty and self-sufficing independence of character, he reminds us of the stoical Romans of the earlier empire, whose works his own resemble in declamatory eloquence and studied and labored style.

"Alfieri," says Matthew Arnold, "is a noble-minded, deeply interesting man, but a monotonous poet." In his tragedies there is a strong family likeness, and in all of them may be observed the "narrow elevation" of which Arnold speaks. But they are not, like others of the classical school, tame and frigid from over-precision, nor are they untrue to nature through servile adherence to tradition. Their dignity and nobility of feeling inspire deep respect; the author is evidently akin to the heroes he depicts, and in their place would have acted as they did. His genius did not lead him to the imitation of the Greeks; but his plays were rather such as a Roman poet might have written if he could have completely broken loose from Greek models. His themes represent some of the grandest subjects taken from history and mythology, and always with a predilection for the heroes of liberty. The same qualities are observed in his minor poems, where also may be noticed the "narrow elevation," with little of music, fancy or variety, but with strong feeling, expressed with remarkable energy, as in the following lines:

Was Angelo born here? and he who wove
Love's charm with sorcery of Tuscan tongue
Indissolubly blent? and he whose song

Laid bare the world below to world above,
And he who from his lonely valley clove
The azure height and trod the stars among?
And he whose searching mind the monarch's wrong,
Fount of the people's misery, did prove?
Yea, these had birth when men might uncontrolled
Speak, read, write, reason, with impunity.
Not from the chair was cowardice extolled;
Not for free thinking would indictment lie;
Nor did the city in her Book of Gold
Inscribe the name and office of a spy.

An enemy to repose, and to a mode of life which had enervated his fellow-countrymen, Alfieri regarded effeminacy as a public crime, and blamed Metastasio more for having corrupted Italian morals than for neglecting the true canons of tragedy. As soon as the predilections of his youth began to calm, and he had discontinued traversing Europe, more as a courier than as a tourist, his first verses were dictated by indignation. He had an exalted idea of the duties and the dignity of man, an ardent love, not only of liberty, but of all the noble actions to which it has given birth. He knew little of European politics, and hence could not judge correctly of the government of any country, confounding the dissolution of all the bonds of society with the freedom after which he sighed; and he had an inveterate hatred of that system of tyranny in the governments around him which had degraded mankind. This, indeed, might be called a personal hatred, since he shared and felt more acutely than any other individual the humiliation which had so long debased the Italians.

Metastasio was the poet of love; Alfieri, of freedom.

All the pieces of the latter have a political tendency, and owe their eloquence and warmth to the powerful sentiment which possessed the poet and compelled him to write from the impulse of his soul. He did not possess the requisite genius for tragedy of the highest order. His vivid emotions were not derived from the imagination, but solely from the feelings. He did not change places with his hero, to be himself moved by varied impressions; he remains always himself, and hence he is deficient in variety of incident, and often degenerates into monotony; but this was partially due to the circumstances of his life and to his unhappy environment.

Before the appearance of Alfieri, the Italians were inferior to all other nations in dramatic art; but, ranging himself by the side of the great French tragedians, he shares with them the advantages which they possess. He has united the qualities of art, unity, singleness of subject and probability, the best features of the French drama, to sublimity of situation and character, to what was best worth preserving in the Græco-Roman theatre, and to the profound thought and sentiment of the English stage. He has rescued tragedy from the salons of courts, to which the reign of Louis XIV had restricted it; he has introduced it to the people, and he has given general interest to the most elevated of poetical productions. He has annihilated the conventional forms which substituted a ridiculous affectation for the sublimity of nature; the gallantry derived from the old French romances, which exhibits the heroes of Greece and Rome under a preposterous disguise; the honeyed

sweetness and pastoral languor, which, since the time of Guarini, gave to all the heroic characters on the Italian stage effeminate sentiments and manners; the affectation of chivalry and valor, which, on the Spanish stage, with its delicate and scrupulous point of honor, converts the loftiest characters into bravos, eager to destroy each other. The gallantry of romances, the effeminacy of pastorals, the point of honor of chivalry appeared to him so many masks imposed upon nature, under which all true feelings and passions were concealed from view. He has torn off these masks, and has placed before us man in his real greatness and in his true relations. If, in this new conception of tragedy, he has sometimes erred, if he has abandoned himself to exaggeration, and to a violence of passion natural to his own character, he has still effected enough to claim our admiration. The writers who have succeeded him and who have profited from the grandeur of his style, while avoiding his faults, sufficiently prove his influence on the Italian drama, and how highly it stands indebted to his genius.

Notwithstanding the entirely novel form which he has given to his tragedies, Alfieri is wholly Italian in his genius. He has sometimes run into extremes, directly opposed to his predecessors merely because he had them alone before his eyes. At the time he commenced writing he was ignorant of Greek, scarcely acquainted with the ancients and a stranger to the French stage; but, during his travels, he had been constantly accustomed to see in the theatres of Italy and of other countries poor or indifferent plays, all in the

classic style. He never bethought him of any other kind, and, believing himself born under the legislation of Aristotle, did not dream of shaking off his sovereignty.

Trissino, in giving birth to the Italian drama by his *Sophonisba*, was the first imitator of the Greeks, although he was incapable of translating their true feeling and spirit. All the poets of the sixteenth century, composing rather in the presence of the ancients than of the public, had sought for their rules in the classic tragedies, and knew no other art than that of conforming to these models. The pedantic spirit of the age had given an undisputed authority to this system, and no one had sought, by analysis, to ascertain on what principles the law of the unities was founded. They were admitted as articles of faith, and the French themselves, who have always observed them with so much fidelity, have never regarded them with the subservience of the Italians.

Features of Alfieri's Drama.

Alfieri was of all poets the most rigid observer of dramatic unity, not merely the unities of time and place, to which he has scrupulously adhered, and which, implicitly observed on the French stage, have been wholly neglected on those of Spain, Germany and England. It is the unity of action and of interest which forms the essence of his treatment, and which is peculiar to him, although in all theatres, as well romantic as classic, a respect for this unity is professed as an essential rule of dramatic art.

Alfieri's aim was to exhibit on the stage a single action and a single passion; to introduce it in the first verse and to keep it in view to the last; not to permit the diversion of the subject for a moment, and to remove, as idle and injurious to the interest of the piece, every character, every conversation which was not essentially connected with the plot and which did not contribute to advance it. Expelling from the theatre all confidants and inferior parts, he has in nearly all his tragedies only the four persons essential to the piece, and at the same time he suppresses all conversation foreign to the plot. Thus he has rendered his tragedies shorter than those of any other poet; so that they seldom exceed fourteen hundred lines.

Alfieri completely banished the effeminate and conventional forms of Metastasio, which reminded him of what he most held in abhorrence—the debasement of his country; but he substituted nothing in its place. The scenes of Metastasio's plays may be said to be in the theatre, but those of Alfieri have no scene whatever, and where the chief passion is love of country he has deprived the patriot of his native soil. It may be remarked that every nation, and almost every tragic poet, has a different way of placing before the eyes of spectators events remote in time or place. The French writers adopted the simple method of transferring their tragic heroes to their own capital. If they describe the Greeks, all that is generally known of them is accurately and consistently painted; but for the rest, they represent manners as being the same in Athens as in Paris, and the court of Agamemnon does not, in their

view, differ much from the court of Louis XIV. The Germans have a different plan, and, in order to enjoy the performance, it is necessary to be acquainted with the history of the piece. They neglect nothing that will make the picture faithful and complete; they sacrifice the rapidity of the action, rather than allow the audience to remain ignorant of a single circumstance. The illusion meets us on every side; and the drama, the manners of which are truly national and unmixed, is a panorama where the eye meets nothing foreign to the subject. Shakespeare had a greater knowledge of man than of facts, and, in consequence, wherever he had laid the scene he created it, by the force of his genius, in exact relation with human nature, though this relation might be false with regard to the people whose names he borrowed; and the richness of his imagination allowed him incessantly to vary these creations and to conduct us perpetually into new enchanted countries. Lopé de Vega, Calderon and their countrymen always place the scene amid the ideal and chivalrous manners of the old Spaniards. It is not their real country, but that of their imagination, and that with which, of all others, they are best acquainted.

Changes Introduced.

Many changes were introduced by Alfieri in the staging and representation of his tragedies, and these will best be explained in his own words. "Here," he says, "will be found no eavesdroppers to pry into secrets, on the discovery of which the plot is to depend; none of

those personages who are unknown to themselves and to others, except such as antiquity has already presented to us, as Ægisthus in *Merope*; no departed spirits reappearing; no thunder and lightning; no celestial interference; no useless massacre nor threats of assassination, as revolting as they are unnecessary; no borrowed or improbable confessions; no love-letters, crosses, funeral-piles, locks of hair; in short, none of those idle stratagems so often before employed." He tells us, further, that he has made it an invariable rule to introduce the action with lively and impassioned dialogue; that, so far as was permissible, he has placed the catastrophe under the eye of the spectator, and terminated the action where he began it—on the stage. He takes to himself credit for having greatly diversified his personages, giving to every tyrant, conspirator, lover and queen an appropriate character. But this is more than the reader will be apt to find in his dramas, for monotony is their principal defect. Not only are characters of the same class mingled together, but even those of different classes bear a resemblance to each other, and all resemble the author. He was a man of too passionate a nature, too proud and independent easily to adopt the sentiments of others. From the beginning to the end of his plays he shows himself the sworn foe of tyrants, the enemy of corruption, and, we might almost say, the enemy of all established forms of society. As his style is always constrained and concise, almost to affectation, the expression of his sentiments, as well as the sentiments themselves, have a too frequent and close similarity.

But the most important change which Alfieri effected in the dramatic art of Italy was in style. All his predecessors, agreeably to the genius of their language, had been harmonious to an excess, and had indulged, to a fault, in the softness of Italian metre. They supported their conversations by brilliant images, and by ornaments almost lyrical. They were prolix even to garburity, and they interlarded their dialogues with commonplace morals and stale philosophical reflections and comparisons. In avoiding these errors Alfieri fell into the opposite extreme. His four first tragedies in particular, *Philip*, *Polynice*, *Antigone* and *Virginia*, were remarkable for the excessive harshness of their style. They were the first that were published of his nineteen plays, which appeared at three different periods. Some obscurity and harshness are also found in the six following pieces; although the numerous criticisms which he had drawn on himself had determined him to recast his style. What he most dreaded was a similarity to Metastasio, and hence he studied to render his style hard and abrupt; to break the monotony of the verse, whenever there was danger of its degenerating into song; to run the lines into each other; to suppress all superfluous ornament, all figurative expression and all comparison, even the most natural, as laboriously as another would have studied to clothe his verses with poetic charms. He thus gives an idea of the bounds which he had prescribed to himself, but which he had far exceeded: "I may say that, with regard to style, my plays appear sufficiently pure, correct and exempt from feebleness, and that their language is neither too

epic nor at any time lyrical, except when it may be so without ceasing to be tragic. It hence happens that there are no similes, except as very short images; very little narrative, and this never long and never inserted where it is not necessary; very few maxims, and never spoken by the author; the thoughts never, and the expression seldom inflated; sometimes, though rarely, new words, in all of which we may remark that a love of brevity, rather than of novelty, has created them." Alfieri seems to imagine that he has rendered his language strictly tragical, because it is neither epic nor lyric and is free from all inflation. But tragedy has, at all times, been regarded as a poem, not as a simple imitation of nature, and should always depend on poetry for its rhythm, its images, its harmony and its colors. When an author renounces the language of poetry, he acts as a sculptor who clothes his statue with real instead of marble vestments. Harmony and the language of imagination have been too entirely rejected by Alfieri. In almost all his tragedies we find more eloquence than poetry.

Alfieri considered himself free from the charge of an inflated style, because he had no pomp of expression, no bombast, no extravagant images; but there is at least an affectation of style in sentiments that are harsh, constrained, exaggerated and expressed with a consciousness, sublime indeed, when it is rarely used, but affected when it is employed with too lavish a hand. Born in a country to which liberty was a stranger, and having neither shared nor known its blessings, this poet had formed to himself a false and exaggerated idea of the

manners, duties and sentiments of a citizen, among which, as he thought, were rudeness in discourse, bitterness of hatred, and a degree of arrogance which was very far from natural. He formed for himself an ideal world, agreeable to the peculiarities and defects of his own character. He is always sententious; he always attempts to be sublime, and his affected simplicity, laconic brevity and loudly-proclaimed sentiments cannot be considered as the true language of nature. Thus, at the opening of the tragedy of *Octavia*, Nero and Seneca appear on the stage:

Seneca.—Lord of the world, what seek'st thou?

Nero.—Peace!

Seneca.—'Twere thine, if thou deprivedst not others of it.

Nero.—'Twere wholly Nero's, if by nuptial band
Abhorr'd, he were not with Octavia joined.

This opening undoubtedly possesses beauty and eloquence, but not such as are suitable to tragedy; since the natural dialogue, when the situation is not one of emotion, should never present ideas or sentiments compressed into so few words, under a form at once epigrammatic and affected.

But with all his shortcomings, Alfieri may be considered as the founder of a new school in Italy. He there effected a revolution in the theatrical art, and whatever objections may have been raised by the critics against his poetical style, his principles have been, in a measure, adopted by the public. He effectually exploded the system of confidants. The repeated stage

tricks, the daggers suspended over the heads of hostages, and the passions of the opera dared no longer show themselves in tragedy; and Italy, at length, adopted as national that system of poetry, austere, eloquent and condensed, but, at the same time, naked, which her only great tragic poet has bestowed on her.

The French revolution was favorable to the fame of Alfieri. His dramas were printed and represented in countries where, before that event, they could neither have been performed nor published. Eighteen editions rapidly succeeded each other. Two large theatres were erected, one at Milan, the other at Bologna, for the performance of the tragedies of Alfieri, with that complete conception and love of the art which, he complained, could not be found among the actors of Italy, and of which he believed them incapable. But these men to whom he could never be induced to trust his plays, enlisted themselves under his banners and adopted his own ideas of the drama. It is related that one of them, named Morocchesi, entreated Alfieri to assist at a representation of *Saul*, which he wished to give at Florence. For a long time he refused, with marked incivility, declaring that it was impossible for Morocchesi to comprehend him, or do justice to so difficult a part. Finally, however, he yielded, and the actor so greatly surpassed his expectation that the author rose in the midst of the performance, and regardless of drawing on himself the eyes of the audience, encouraged the player by applauding him with all his force, crying "Bravo, Morocchesi!" A few years later these tragedies, which Alfieri considered to be so little adapted to common

performers, were represented by mechanics, bakers and tailors, the greater part of whom were unable to read, but had, nevertheless, succeeded in committing them entirely to memory.

Philip II.

The first tragedy composed by Alfieri was *Philip II.* It was a subject well suited to his genius, to delineate this tyrant in his darkest colors, and to describe the secret and disastrous passion of his son Don Carlos. Isabella appears alone on the stage, and in a passionate soliloquy reproaches herself with the love, which she conceals in her heart, for Don Carlos, while she is the wife of Philip. Carlos enters her apartments; she attempts to fly, and he complains, with bitterness, that, like the common crowd of courtiers, she shuns him since he has lost his father's favor. He implores her compassion, congratulates himself upon having obtained it, and thus finds consolation for his sufferings. Yet, of all his grief, he says the most severe is derived from herself.

Ah! thou art ignorant of my father's nature,
And may kind Heaven that ignorance prolong!
The treacherous intrigues of an impious court
To thee are all unknown. An upright heart
Could not believe, much less such guilt imagine.
More cruel than the sycophantic train
Surrounding him, 'tis Philip that abhors me,
He sets the example to the servile crowd;
His wrathful temper chafes at nature's ties;
Yet do I not forget that he's my father.
If for one day I could forget that tie,
And rouse the slumber of my smother'd wrongs,

Never, oh, never, should he hear me mourn
My ravish'd honors, my offended fame,
His unexampled and unnatural hate.
No, of a wrong more deep I would upbraid him:
He took my all the day he tore thee from me.

In fact, Isabella had at first been destined for the wife of Carlos. The king had encouraged their passion, but he afterward required that their sentiments should yield to his own political views. Isabella meanwhile represses the love of Don Carlos; she represents it to him in the light of a crime; but she is powerfully agitated, and when he asks,

Am I then so guilty?

she replies,

Would it were only thou!

This avowal is understood, and Isabella, unable to retract it, presses Carlos at least to shun her presence, and to fly; or, if flight be not possible, to follow her no more, to avoid further interviews, and, since their error has only had Heaven for a witness, to conceal their passion from the world and from themselves and to tear the recollection of it from their hearts. She is scarcely gone when Perez unexpectedly enters, the friend of Carlos, and the only man who, in this despotic court, entertains liberal sentiments. He is surprised at the agitation of Carlos, and begs him to acquaint him with his griefs, that he may share them with him.

Carlos for some time repulses his generous friendship, and advises him to follow the example of the courtiers, who all consider it a crime to be faithful to him who is hated by the king. Their conversation is supported, perhaps, with more monotony than true energy, by bitter invectives against the falsehood of mankind, the corruption of courts, and the debasing effects of tyranny. Carlos at length gives his hand to Perez, in testimony of inviolable friendship and as an earnest of his promise to allow him to share his sufferings, though he cannot disclose his secret.

The first scene of the second act, between Philip and his minister, Gomez, commences in a manner so laconic and sententious that it might easily degenerate into affectation.

Philip.—What, above all things that this world can give,
Dost thou hold dear?

Gomez.—Thy favor.

Philip.—By what means
Dost hope to keep it?

Gomez.—By the means that gained it:
Obedience and silence.

Philip.—Thou art called
This day to practise both.

In this manner Philip instructs Gomez to observe the queen during a conversation that he designs to have with her. He thus prepares the spectators to observe all her feelings, and he himself manifests suspicions which he is unwilling to reveal in words. Isabella arrives. Philip consults her respecting his son. He ac-

cuses him of the most odious treason, in having maintained a correspondence with the rebels of Batavia; in having supported them in their revolt against their God and their king; and in having, on that very day, given audience to their ambassador. But this is not the suspicion which dwells in his mind. His words, commenced in an equivocal manner, are artfully broken in such a way that Isabella may believe that he has discovered their mutual attachment. Isabella trembles at every dubious expression, and the spectator with her.

Philip.—And tell without reserve, dost love or hate
Carlos, my son?

Isabella.—My lord?

Phil.—I understand thee.

If thou didst yield to thy first impulses,
And not obey the stern behests of duty,
Thou wouldst behold him. . . . as a step-dame.

Isa.—No.

Thou art deceived. . . . The prince

Phil.—Is dear, then, to thee,

Yet hast thou so much of true honor left,
That being Philip's wife, that Philip's son
Thou lov'st with love maternal.

Isa.—Thou alone

Art law to all my thoughts: thou lovest him;
At least I deem so; and e'en so I love him.

Phil.—Since thy well-regulated, noble heart,

Beholds not Carlos with a step-dame's thought,
Nor blind instinct of maternal fondness,
I choose thee for that Carlos as a judge.

Isa.—Me?

Phil.—Thou hast heard it.

Philip then acquaints Isabella with the enormity of Carlos' guilt. Yet, when the crime of the prince is

explicitly declared, she undertakes his defence with noble eloquence and courage. The king appears to be convinced; he sends for Carlos, speaks to him of the affection of the queen, the maternal affection, that had led her to undertake his defence; he seems even to be aware of their interview in the first act; but, after having alarmed them both, he dismisses them with an apparent return of kindness, and advises them to see each other frequently. This double examination is terminated by a scene between Philip and Gomez.

Philip.—Heard'st thou?

Gomez.— I heard.

Phil.— Sawest thou?

Gom.— I saw.

Phil.—Oh rage!

Then, then, suspicion—

Gom.— Now is certainty.

Phil.—And Philip yet is unrevenge!

Gom.— Reflect—

Phil.—I have reflected. Follow thou my footsteps.

Carlos, who well knows his father's character, is alarmed at the sympathy which he has manifested, and, above all, at his kindness, which with him is always the harbinger of a more terrible hatred. He seeks an interview with the queen. He communicates to her his fears at the commencement of the third act, and he conjures her never to speak of him again to the king. The queen cannot believe him; she retires; and Gomez, entering, congratulates Carlos on being again received into favor by the king, professes his devotion to him

and tenders his services; but Carlos turns his back on him, and withdraws without deigning to reply. Philip then, in the same salon, assembles a council. He appears, followed by his guards, by several counsellors of state, who are silent, by Perez, and by Lionardo, who doubtless was intended by the author for the grand inquisitor, but to whom he has not given that title. Philip, in a crafty discourse, informs his council that he has assembled them to judge his son. He then accuses Carlos of having attempted to assassinate him, and says that the prince had approached him from behind, his sword raised to strike him, when a cry from one of his courtiers put him to flight. Gomez supports the accusation; he produces intercepted letters of the prince, which he pretends afford proofs of a treasonable correspondence with France and with the revolted Hollanders; and he concludes by adjudging Don Carlos to death. Lionardo follows, and, in a hypocritical and ferocious speech, charges Carlos with heresy and impiety, and requires the king to lend his arm in avenging the cause of offended Heaven. Perez then speaks, and triumphantly exculpates his friend. He easily proves that all the accusations are feigned, and he does not suffer a doubt to remain on the mind of any present; but he addresses the king himself and his counsellors with an arrogance which Philip would not permit, and in the character of Perez we plainly recognize the author himself. All the characters are highly exaggerated, and the scene of the council, although the speeches are written with great eloquence, is marred by its want of probability. Philip orders his advisers to pass judgment or

his son, and exasperated with Perez, exclaims, when alone:

And can a soul so formed
Spring where I reign, or where I reign, exist?

At the beginning of the fourth act Carlos expects a confidant of the queen, but she does not appear. Instead comes the king, preceded by his guards. It is night, and Carlos, seeing the soldiers approach, draws his sword to defend himself, but replaces it when he sees his father. The king accuses him of having raised his arm against him, and a violent altercation ensues, in which Carlos uses the most violent and bitter language, such as Alfieri always assigns to the enemies of tyrants, and which no tyrant would tolerate. Philip orders his son to be arrested and conducted to a dungeon; but as this had already been ordered by the council, nothing is gained by the quarrel, and it leads to no result.

While Carlos is being led to prison, Isabella enters. She is alarmed, and Philip increases her fears by his equivocal answers respecting the prince, her own remarks causing her to be further compromised. She fears that her attachment has not escaped the observation of the tyrant, and that she may have said too much, and so betrayed herself. When she is left alone, Gomez enters, as he carries to the king the sentence of the council, which has condemned his son to death. He communicates his message to the queen; he gains her confidence by compassionating the prince, and leads her on to manifest the deep interest which she feels for

him. In turn, he unveils the atrocious character of Philip; he leaves no doubt of the innocence of Carlos; he promises to admit her into the prison, and though we are aware that Gomez is not likely to sacrifice the interests of Philip, except to draw the queen into a confession, there is yet a revival of hope which supports the interest of the play.

The fifth act takes place in the dungeon. Carlos is there alone, awaiting death with constancy. His only fear is that his father should have any suspicion of his love for Isabella, for his words and looks have alarmed him. The queen herself suddenly enters, and informs the prince what his fate will be if he does not fly; but Gomez, she tells him, has arranged for his escape, and by his aid she has obtained admission to the prison-house. Carlos then sees the abyss into which she has fallen, in common with himself, and thus addresses her:

Incautious queen!

Thou art too credulous. What hast thou done?

Why didst thou trust to such a feigned compassion?

Of the impious king, most implous minister,

If he spoke truth, 'twas with the truth to cheat thee.

He entreats her to fly while yet there is time, to save her honor and to remove all pretext for the ferocious vengeance of the king. But while she is hesitating Philip appears. He expresses a savage joy at having them both completely in his power. Without their knowledge he has become acquainted with their passion from its commencement, and has observed its progress. His jealousy is not of the heart, but of offended pride,

and this he openly avows. Carlos attempts to justify Isabella, but she admits no excuse, provokes Philip by exasperating language and asks for death as a welcome release, Alfieri putting into her mouth his own sentiments and expressions of hatred. And now Gomez enters, bearing a cup of poison and a dagger still reeking with the blood of Perez. Philip offers the two lovers their choice between the dagger and the bowl. Carlos chooses the dagger and strikes himself a mortal blow. Isabella congratulates herself that she is about to die, whereupon Philip, to punish her the more, condemns her to life; but she snatches from the king his own poniard and stabs herself to the heart. This stage trick is unworthy of Alfieri, and is also very improbable, for the king's poniard, if he carried one, would have been fastened to his girdle or hidden by the folds of his dress.

Alfieri paints in the most sombre colors the profound dissimulation of the Spanish monarch, throwing a veil over his councils and his policy, and conducting him to the close of the tragedy without his revealing to anyone his secret thoughts. It is a master-stroke to assign a confidant to Philip, to whom he communicates nothing, even at the moment when he calls him to his councils. Extremely effective, also, is the silent concert between Gomez, Lionardo and the king, in the perpetration of the crime. Very different is Schiller's handling of the subject in his *Don Carlos*, where he describes Philip as possessed of an openness of heart which wanted only the element of truth to make it interesting, but was very far removed from the real char-

acter of that monarch. He deprives the king of all the terror derived from the dark, impenetrable silence with which he invests himself in Alfieri's version.

A Literary Epoch.

The publication of Alfieri's four tragedies marks an epoch in the literary annals of Italy. Before their appearance, the people, content with their languid love plots and effeminate plays, considered the rules of dramatic composition firmly established, attributing the weariness they felt during performances which had no real attractions, to lack of dramatic talent in the authors, and not to false ideas of art. Alfieri threw off the yoke, and every high-minded Italian was united with him in bonds of mutual sympathy. Thus was the nobler species of tragedy mingled with the love of glory and liberty. The theatre, which had so long been considered the school of intrigue, of effeminacy and servility, was now regarded by the cultured classes as the nurse of mental vigor, of honor and public virtue, and no longer were they humiliated by the marked inferiority of their dramatists to those of other nations. All united in admiring the elevation, the nobleness and energy of Alfieri's sentiments, and the expression of opinions, which had before been banished from Italy, burst forth like the long-suppressed voice of public feeling. Even within the narrower boundaries of the critical art we find a variety and profundity of knowledge displayed by men whose talents and acquirements had been hitherto unknown, and who would never have been

recognized unless some great genius like Alfieri had prepared the way for them.

The labors of these critics produced an effect on Alfieri which is manifested in his subsequent works. His four first tragedies were only a small portion of those that remained in his desk, and at three different periods were successively submitted to the public. In the interval between their publication he observed the general impression which they produced, and with the assistance of some of his friends performed the dramas himself, exposing them, by every means in his power, to the test of theatrical representation. He gradually reformed his style and adapted his compositions to the general taste. His dramas were thus distributed into three classes, distinguished by the period of their publication, as well as by the various alterations which they had undergone in consequence of changes in the author's style and system.

Virginia.

Philip II was published in 1783, together with *Polynices*, with its sequel, *Antigone* and *Virginia*. The three dramas, while displaying beauties of the first order, have, in common with *Philip*, a certain hardness of style, and exhibit traces of the author's original acerbity, notwithstanding all the pains which he took to correct that fault in later editions. They resemble each other still more in the writer's obstinate attachment to his system, in the stiffness of the action, in the bitterness of the sentiments and in the baldness both

of the action and the poetry. In the last of them the attachment of Alfieri to the laws of unity led him into a strange error. The murder of Virginia by her father arouses the people, and at the same time enrages Appius Claudius. The people cry to arms, and exclaim: "Appius is a tyrant—let him perish!" Alfieri, thinking that his tragedy, being entitled *Virginia*, necessarily terminated with the death of his heroine, lets the curtain drop upon the people and the lictors in the midst of the conflict, so that the audience is ignorant of the result, and whether Appius or the people triumph. To leave any action unfinished at the conclusion of a drama is a gross violation of the unity, for it induces every one to believe that such action was totally independent of it. The rigorous notions which induced the author to let the curtain fall exactly ten lines after the death of Virginia are still more out of place, when we consider that Appius is almost as important a personage as she is, and that his destruction, by which Virginia is to be avenged, completes the essential action of the poem.

Agamemnon.

Among the tragedies of the second period may be selected the *Agamemnon*, a play with only four characters, and differing essentially in treatment from the drama of Æschylus. The scene, which is laid in the palace of Argos, opens with a very beautiful soliloquy of Ægisthus, who imagines himself pursued by the shade of Thyestes, demanding vengeance. This he promises. Born in shame, the offspring of infamy and

incest, he believes himself called upon by destiny to commit the crime. Hour after hour he awaits the return of the conqueror of Troy, and he promises the shade of his father to immolate him and his family. Clytemnestra seeks him, wishing to divert those painful thoughts which are so plainly depicted on his countenance. Ægisthus only speaks to her of his approaching departure and of the necessity of avoiding the sight of the son of Atreus, the enemy of his race. He can bear neither his anger nor his contempt, and to the one or the other he knows that he must be exposed. He thus wounds the pride which Clytemnestra feels in the object of her love, and incites and directs against Agamemnon the irritation of his delirious spouse. Clytemnestra at last beholds in Agamemnon only the murderer of Iphigenia. She calls to mind with bitterness that horrible sacrifice, and trembles at the name of such a father. All her affections are concentrated in Ægisthus and her children, and she loves to think that Ægisthus will be a more tender father than Agamemnon to Electra and to Orestes. Electra approaches, and Clytemnestra, in order to speak with her, prevails upon Ægisthus to leave them.

Electra relates the various reports which have spread through Argos respecting the Grecian fleet. Some assert that contrary winds have driven it back to the mouth of the Bosphorus; others that it has been shipwrecked on the rocks, while others again believe that they see the sails near the shore. Clytemnestra demands, with sarcastic bitterness, whether the gods wish that another of her children should be sacrificed for the

return of Agamemnon, even as one perished on his departure. The character of Electra is admirable throughout. All her speeches are full of tenderness, respect and devotion to her father, and of affection and deep pity for her mother's aberration. She hints to her cautiously and sorrowfully that she is aware of her fresh dislike to Agamemnon, and that the court and the public, as well as herself, are acquainted with the cause of it.

Beloved mother,
What art thou doing? I do not believe
That a flagitious passion fires thy breast.
Involuntary fondness, sprung from pity,
Which youth, especially when 'tis unhappy,
Is apt to inspire, these, mother, are the baits
By which, without thyself suspecting it,
Thou hast been caught. Thou hast not hitherto
Each secret impulse rigorously examined:
A bosom conscious of its rectitude
Hardly admits suspicion of itself;
And here, perchance, there is no ground for it:
Perchance thy fame thou yet hast scarcely sullied,
Much less thy virtue, and there still is time
To make atonement with one easy step.—
Ah! by the sacred shade, so dear to thee,
Of thy devoted daughter; by that love
Which thou hast ever shown and felt for me—
That love of which to-day I am not worthy;
How can I more persuasively adjure thee?
By thy son's life, Orestes' life, I pray thee
Pause on the brink of this tremendous gulf;
Beloved mother, pause. Afar from Argos
Banish Ægisthus: stop malignant tongues
By thy deportment: with thy children weep
The hardships of Atrides, and frequent
With them the sacred temples of the gods
To implore his swift return,

Clytemnestra is moved; she weeps; she accuses herself, and she likewise accuses the blood of Leda which runs through her veins; and the momentary flash of truth which passes across her mind, while it fails to convince her, fills her with terror.

At the beginning of the second act Ægisthus and Clytemnestra dispute upon the steps most expedient to be taken. The ships of Agamemnon now enter the port. He lands and advances toward the palace, upon which Ægisthus proposes to make his escape, but Clytemnestra, mad with love, will listen to no advice nor see any danger. If prudence bids her hasten the flight of her lover, it is her part, she says, to fly with him, like Helen. Ægisthus, who beseeches her to suffer his departure, endeavors, by the apprehension of his absence, to add fuel to her love and jealousy. He, in fact, wishes to be prevented from going, and Clytemnestra begs him to remain a single day, exacting an oath from him that he will not quit the walls of Argos before the ensuing dawn. He consents and Electra, appearing, begs her mother to fly to the king. Clytemnestra, instead of answering her daughter, solemnly requests Ægisthus to repeat his oath; and this appeal, which she again makes at the end of the scene, after Electra has manifested her aversion for Ægisthus, and the dread with which his stay inspires her, fully displays all Clytemnestra's passion. Ægisthus, being left alone, rejoices that his victims have at length fallen into his snares, and again promises the shade of Thyestes to avenge upon Agamemnon and his children the execrable repast of Atreus. He at length retires, on

beholding the approach of Agamemnon, accompanied by Electra and Clytemnestra, and surrounded by the soldiers and the people.

Alfieri has skilfully delineated in Agamemnon the tender feelings of a good king returning to his people, of a patriot restored to his country and of a kind father again embracing his family:

At last I see the wished-for walls of Argos.
This ground which now I tread is the loved spot
Where once I wandered with my infant feet.
All that I see around me are my friends:—
My wife, my daughter, and my faithful people,
And you, ye household gods, whom I at last
Return to worship. What have I to wish?
What does there now remain for me to hope?
How long and tedious do ten years appear
Spent in a foreign country, far from all
The heart holds dear! With what profound delight,
After the labors of a bloody war,
Shall I repose? Oh home, beloved asylum,
Where peace alone awaits us, with what joy
Thee I revisit! But am I, alas!
The only one that tastes of comfort here?
My wife, my daughters! silently ye stand
Fixing upon the ground unquietly
Your conscious eyes. O heaven, do ye not feel
A joy that equals mine in being thus
Restored to my embrace?

Clytemnestra is agitated and Electra is in fear for her; but her presence of mind is restored by the very sound of her own voice, and as she proceeds her answers become more intelligible. Agamemnon himself alludes to the misfortune which has deprived him of his other daughter, and which he regards as a divine

ordinance to which his paternal heart is yet unable to bow:

Oft in my helmet bonneted I wept
In silence: but, except the father, none
Were conscious of these tears.

He inquires for Orestes and longs to embrace him. He asks whether he has yet entered upon the paths of virtue, and whether, when he hears of glorious achievements or beholds a brandished sword, his eyes do not sparkle with ardor.

Agamemnon and Electra appear at the commencement of the third act, and the king inquires from his daughter what is the cause of the singular change which he has remarked in Clytemnestra. He is less surprised at her first silence than at the studied and constrained manner in which she afterward addressed him. Electra, compelled to give some reason for the change, attributes it to the sacrifice of Iphigenia, and thus gives Agamemnon an opportunity of exculpating himself to the audience from all the odium which that sacrifice had cast upon him. He then asks how it happens that the son of Thyestes is in Argos. He is astonished at learning the fact for the first time on his arrival, and he perceives that every one mentions his name with repugnance. Electra replies that Ægisthus is unfortunate, but that Agamemnon will judge better than she can whether he is worthy of pity. Ægisthus is afterward brought before him, and informs him that the hatred and jealousy of his brothers have driven him from his country. He represents himself as a pro-

scribed suppliant; he flatters Agamemnon to obtain his favor; he is humble without debasing himself, and treacherous without creating disgust. Agamemnon reminds him of the family enmities, which should have induced him to look for an asylum in any other place than the palace of Atreus:

Hitherto, Ægisthus,
Thou wert, and still thou art, to me unknown;
I neither hate nor love thee; yet, though willing
To lay aside hereditary discord,
I cannot, without feeling in my breast,
I know not what of strange and perplex'd feeling,
Behold the countenance, nor hear the voice
Of one that is the offspring of Thyestes.

As Ægisthus, however, implores his protection, he promises to use his influence amongst the Greeks in his favor, but he commands him to leave Argos before the morrow. As Ægisthus leaves the king, Clytemnestra enters. She is much agitated and fears lest her husband has discovered her inconstancy. She rejects the consolatory attentions of her daughter and the hope which she had endeavored to excite in her breast that it was still possible for her to return to the paths of duty. At length she retires to indulge her melancholy reflections in solitude.

The fourth act opens with a conversation between Clytemnestra and Ægisthus, the former, after parting from her lover, abandoning herself to the impetuosity of her passion. This scene, which leads to such fatal consequences, is managed with infinite art. Ægisthus, while he appears submissive, tender and despairing,

aims only at instilling poison into the heart of his victim. She wishes to follow him, to fly with him. He, however, shows her the folly of her projects and the impossibility of executing any of them. He represents himself as surrounded with dangers, and her as lost, and for a long time he refuses to mention any means of avoiding the evil. At last he tells her that one resource remains, though an unworthy one.

Ægisthus.—Another step perhaps e'en now remains,
But unbecoming——

Clytemnestra.— And it is?——

Ægis.— Too cruel.

Cly.—But certain——

Ægis.— Certain! ah, too much so!

Cly.— How

Canst thou hide it from me?

Ægis.— How canst thou
Of me demand it?

Clytemnestra still hesitates; she wavers; she considers all the pretended causes of hatred toward Agamemnon; all her own and her lover's dangers, and she then asks what other step she can take, to which Ægisthus answers: None. But as he utters this word the dark glaring of his eyes at once informs the queen that he thirsts for the blood of Agamemnon. Clytemnestra tremblingly strengthens herself to commit the crime, and Ægisthus chooses that moment to tell her that the king has brought Cassandra with him; that she is his mistress, and that he intends speedily to sacrifice his wife to her. The approach of Electra compels the

guilty pair to separate. She perceives with terror the agitation of her mother, and forebodes the crimes of Ægisthus. She beseeches the king to dismiss him immediately. Agamemnon attributes her terror to the hereditary enmity between the blood of Atreus and of Thyestes, and feels that he would be wanting in hospitality if he should hasten the banishment of an unfortunate stranger. He then consults Clytemnestra, who, at the very name of Ægisthus, betrays the most extreme emotion. Demanding the cause of her disturbance, he laments with her the death of Iphigenia, and attempts, but in vain, to dissipate her suspicions respecting Cassandra.

At the commencement of the fifth act Clytemnestra appears alone with a poniard in her hand. She has bound herself by an oath to shed the blood of her husband, and she prepares to perpetrate the crime; but, in the absence of Ægisthus, remorse attacks her. She is shocked at the enterprise and casts away the dagger, when Ægisthus, again making his appearance, rekindles her fury. He informs her that Agamemnon is acquainted with their love, and that on the morrow they must appear before that stern judge, when death and infamy will be their portion if Atrides is suffered to live. Perusading her to persevere, he arms her with a more deadly dagger—with that which sacrificed the sons of Thyestes. He hurries her into the apartment of her husband, and invokes the shade of Thyestes to enjoy the infernal revenge which is to be accomplished by the wife of the son of Atreus. During this terrible invocation are heard the cries of Agamemnon, who

ELEMENTIS, AETHIOLUS.



recognizes his wife as he dies. Of Clytemnestra, who returns to the stage distracted, Ægisthus takes no notice, while the palace resounds with terrific cries. He perceives that the time is now come to show himself in his true colors and to gather the fruits of his protracted hypocrisy. He determines to murder Orestes and to mount the throne of Atrides. Electra, rushing in, accuses Ægisthus of the crime, but, seeing her mother armed with a bloody poniard, she recognizes, with horror, the true assassin. She seizes the dagger, in order to preserve it for Orestes, whom she has placed in a safe retreat. The horrid truth now flashes upon Clytemnestra's mind; she sees that Ægisthus has been gratifying his hatred, and not his love, and she flies after him to preserve the life of her son.

Other Tragedies.

With the *Agamemnon* were published five other tragedies—the *Orestes*, *Rosmunda*, *Octavia*, *Timoleon* and *Merope*. The first is a continuation of the *Agamemnon*, with an interval of ten years, and the play opens on the anniversary of the king's murder. By making the action, from the commencement, extremely violent, and the hate, even of the virtuous characters, unnaturally intense, Alfieri thought that he had produced a drama worthy of his talents; but such was not the opinion of the public. In order to touch the feelings, it was necessary for him to mingle at least some trace of tenderness with the natural acerbity of his genius; but to this he would not consent, fatiguing the spectators

by scenes of uninterrupted rage. Electra, Ægisthus, Clytemnestra and Orestes seem to be always prepared to tear one another to pieces. The fury of Orestes is so unceasing and so near to madness that we can easily comprehend how it was possible for him, in the last act, to murder his mother without knowing her.

Rosmunda, a queen of the barbarian Lombards, who puts her husband, Alboino, to death in order to revenge the murder of her father, Cunimond, has furnished Alfieri with the subject of another of his tragedies, one that the author regarded as a masterpiece, but which did not find favor with the public. The two female characters, Rosmunda and Romilda, the daughter of Alboino by a former wife, both of them urged by the demoniac spirit of revenge, are engaged from the beginning, as are all the other characters, in a war of hatred which disgusts the spectator. Nature, the true gradation of the passions and theatrical effect, are alike sacrificed to this universal fury. The subject of the drama is the author's own invention, and in this he has not been happy, for the plot is not natural.

The historical tragedies of *Octavia* and *Timoleon* are both open to the charge of exaggeration. In the former, the vices of the characters, and in the latter, their virtues, are on too gigantic a scale. Neither the madness of Nero nor the fratricide of Timoleon, although it restored liberty to Corinth, is a fit subject for the drama. *Merope* is the last of the group, and, perhaps, the best. It is interesting, correct in feeling, and original in conception, notwithstanding that the theme had been treated by Maffei and Voltaire.

V.

Alfieri's Later Works.

Among the tragedies which belong to the later portion of Alfieri's works, *Saul* is the one which affords the best extracts. This play, which was a favorite with the author, likewise maintained its place upon the stage. The austere and vigorous style of Alfieri suited well with the patriarchal times which are there represented. We do not require the first monarch of Israel to be surrounded by a numerous court or to act solely by the intervention of his ministers, and we cannot forget that he was a shepherd-king. On the other hand, there is in portions of the drama an oriental richness of expression, and, indeed, this is the first of Alfieri's tragedies in which the language is habitually poetical.

At the dawn of day David, clothed as a soldier, appears alone at Gilboa, between the camps of the Hebrews and Philistines. God who has protected him from the pursuit and frenzy of Saul, has now conducted him thither to give fresh proofs of his obedience and his valor. Jonathan, coming forth from the tent of the king to pray, finds his friend and recognizes him by his hardihood. He tells him how his

father, Saul, is tormented by an evil spirit, and how Abner, his lieutenant, takes advantage of this to sacrifice all whose merit has given him offence. He then informs him that Michal, the sister of Jonathan and the wife of David, is in the camp with Saul, her father, whom she is comforting and consoling in his afflictions, and from whom she has begged, in return, that he will restore David to her. He addresses David with a mixture of respect and love, regarding him both as the friend of his heart and as the messenger and favorite of God. The tender, faithful and constant nature of David is painted in the finest manner. The love of the Lord triumphs over all his affections; but his enthusiasm, however exalted, does not extinguish the natural sentiments of his heart. Jonathan informs him that Michal will soon leave the tent and join him in the morning prayers, and, as she approaches, he persuades David to conceal himself, in order that he may guard her against the surprise. Michal is a tender and suffering woman; she has no other thought but of David; all her fears and all her desires centre in him. As soon as Jonathan has prepared her to expect the return of her husband, David throws himself into her arms. They agree that he should present himself to Saul previous to the battle which the latter is about to fight with the Philistines, and that Michal and Jonathan shall prepare the way for his reception, while David himself awaits their instructions in a neighboring cavern.

The second act opens with a scene between Saul and Abner. Saul is lamenting over his old age, the succor of

the Almighty withheld from him, and the power of his enemies, with which he is deeply affected. His language is that of a noble but dejected soul. Abner attributes all the misfortunes of the king to David, but Saul replies:

Thou 'rt deceived—

All my calamities may be referred
To a more terrible cause.—And what? wouldst thou
Conceal from me the horror of my state?
Ah! were I not a father as I am,
Alas! too certainly, of much loved children,
Would I now wish life, victory, or the throne?
I should already, and a long time since,
Headlong have cast myself 'mid hostile swords:
I should already, thus at least, at once
Have closed the horrible life that I drag on.
How many years have now pass'd since a smile
Was seen to play upon my lips? My children,
Whom still I love so much, if they caress me,
For the most part inflame my heart to rage:
Impatient, fierce, incensed and turbulent,
I am a burden to myself and others.
In peace I wish for war, in war for peace:
Poison conceal'd I drink in every cup—
In every friend I see an enemy:
The softest carpets of Assyria seem
Planted with thorns to my unsolaced limbs:
My transient sleep is agonized with fear—
Each dream, with imaged terrors that distract me.
Why should I add to this dark catalogue—
Who would believe it?—The sonorous trumpet
Speaks to my ears in an appalling voice,
And fills the heart of Saul with deep dismay.
Thou seest clearly that Saul's tottering house
Is desolate, bereft of all its splendor;
Thou seest that God hath cast me off forever.

The character of Saul, throughout the whole drama, is consistent with the representation of it in this scene. He impetuously abandons himself to the most contrary passions, and the latest word which he hears awakens a new storm in his soul. He easily believes his glory tarnished and his power departing; he menaces; he punishes, and his fury appears to him a fresh instance of that divine vengeance under which he is perishing. Abner attributes his violence and his aberration of mind to the superstitious terrors which Samuel and the prophets of Rama have excited, and which the enthusiasm of David has nourished. Jonathan and Michal, who enter at this moment, entreat him, on the contrary, to believe that his power and glory are connected with the return of David, whom they announce as the messenger of God and the pledge of divine protection. When the mind of Saul is thus warmed, David enters and throws himself at his feet. He calms, by his submissive deportment, the first burst of anger which his appearance has excited; he repels the accusations of Abner, and proves that, far from laying snares for the king, he had his life in his power in the cave of Enjedi, where, while Saul was sleeping, he cut off a portion of his garment, which he now presents to him. Saul is convinced, he calls David his son and commends him to the love of Michal as a recompense for his sufferings. He then commits to him the command of the army, and begs him to arrange the order of the approaching battle.

At the commencement of the third act Abner gives an account to David of the order of battle which he had proposed when he conceived himself to be sole general.

He mingles some bitter irony with his report, which David treats with silence. The latter approves of the military dispositions and confides the execution of them to Abner, mingling praises of his valor with the counsels which he gives him. Scarcely has Abner departed when Michal appears to inform her husband that the general, having seen Saul, has awakened with a single word all his former fury. She fears that David will again be forced to fly, and she swears to accompany him in his exile. Saul now appears with Jonathan and displays symptoms of strong insanity:

Who are ye? Who speaks of pure air here?
This? 'tis a thick, impenetrable gloom,
A land of darkness, and the shades of death.
Ah, see! more nearly it approaches me—
A fatal wreath of blood surrounds the sun—
Heard'st thou the death notes of ill-omen'd birds?
With loud laments the vocal air resounds
That smite my ears, compelling me to weep;
But what, do ye weep also?

Saul then asks for David and reproaches him for his pride—for deep jealousy is the true madness of Saul—and for the enthusiastic tone in which he speaks of God, since the Divinity is his enemy and his praises are insults to Saul. He is astonished at beholding the sword which David had taken from Goliath and which had been afterward dedicated to God in the tabernacle of Nob, and he becomes furious when he learns that Abimelech has restored this sword to David. But his fury exhausts itself; he relents; he melts into tears, and Jonathan urges David to seize upon this moment

to calm the frenzy of the king by his songs and his harp. David sings or recites some lyrical effusions, of which he changes the metre according to the subject, to suit the temper of Saul's mind. He first implores the protection of God, then sings of martial glory in the stanza of the canzoni; but, upon Saul exclaiming that these are the songs of his youth and that henceforward relaxation, oblivion and peace must be the portion of his old age, David sings the hymn of peace in harmonious and tender strains. Saul is angry with himself that he can be moved by such effeminate compositions, and David again commences his war song. In animated dithyrambic verse he paints the glory of Saul in his battles and represents himself as marching in his footsteps. This allusion to another warrior exasperates Saul; in his fury he attempts to transfix the minstrel who has dared to introduce the mention of another's exploits, and David escapes with difficulty, while Jonathan and Michal restrain the anger of the king.

In the fourth scene of the third act Saul bemoans his fate in the presence of his daughter Michal, Jonathan and David:

Saul.—I am bereft of peace; the sun, my kingdom,
My children, and my pow'r of thought, all, all
Are taken from me! . . . Ah, unhappy Saul!
Who doth console thee? who is now the guide,
The prop of thy bewilder'd feebleness? . . .
Thy children all are mute; are harsh and cruel. . . .
And of the doting and infirm old man
They only wish the death; and naught attracts
My children but the fatal diadem
Which now is twined around thy hoary head.
Wrest it at once; and at the same time sever

From this now tremulous decaying form
 Your father's palsied head. . . . Ah, wretched state!
 Better were death. I wish for death. . . .

Michal.— O father! . . .

We all desire thy life: we each of us
 Would die ourselves, to rescue thee from death. . . .

Jonathan.—Now, since in tears his fury is dissolved,
 Brother, do thou, to recompose his soul,
 Exert thy voice. So many times already
 Hast thou enthrall'd him with celestial songs
 To calm oblivion.

Mich.— Yes; thou seest now,
 The breathing in his panting breast subsides;
 His looks, just now so savage, swim in tears:
 Now is the time to lend him thy assistance.

David.—May God in mercy speak to him through me.—

Omnipotent, eternal, infinite,
 Thou, who dost govern each created thing;
 Thou, who from nothing mad'st me by thy might,
 Blest with a soul that dares to thee take wing;
 Thou, who canst pierce th' abyss of endless night,
 And all its myst'ries into daylight bring;
 The universe doth tremble at thy nod,
 And sinners prostrate own the outstretch'd arm of God.

Oft on the gorgeous blazing wings ere now
 Of thousand cherubim wert thou reveal'd;
 Oft did thy pure Divinity endow
 Thy people's shepherd in the martial field:
 To him a stream of eloquence wert thou;
 Thou wert his sword, his wisdom and his shield:
 From thy bright throne, O God, bestow one ray
 To cleave the gath'ring clouds that intercept the day.
 In tears of darkness we. . . .

Saul.— Hear I the voice
 Of David? . . . From a mortal lethargy
 It seems to wake me, and displays to me
 The cheering radiance of my early years.

Dav.—Who comes, who comes, unseen, yet heard?

A sable cloud of dust appear'd,

Chased by the eastern blast.—

But it has burst; and from its womb

A thousand brandish'd swords illume

The track through which it pass'd. . . .

Saul, as a tow'r, his forehead rears,

His head a flaming circlet wears.

The earth beneath his feet

Echoes with tramp of horse and men:

The sea, the sky, the hills, the plain,

The war-like sounds repeat.

In awful majesty doth Saul appear;

Horsemen and chariots from before him fly:

Chill'd by his presence is each heart with fear;

And god-like terrors lighten in his eye.

Ye sons of Ammon, late so proud,

Where now the scorn, the insults loud,

Ye raised against our host?

Your corpses more than fill the plain;

The ample harvest of your slain

Invalidates your boast.

See what it is thus to depend

On gods unable to defend.—

But wherefore from afar

Hear I another trumpet sound?

'Tis Saul's:—he levels with the ground

All Edom's sons of war.

After a few more verses in similar strain, David continues:

The monarch is roused from his slumbers:

"Arms, arms," he imperiously cries.

They are vanquished,—the enemy's numbers;

What champion his valor defies?

I see, I see a track of fearful fire,
 To which perforce the hostile squadrons yield.
 Before the arms of Israel they retire,
 Which, black with hostile gore, possess the field.

The wing'd thunderbolt huge stones doth shower,
 And far less promptly doth the foe retreat,
 Than our dread sov'reign in his mighty power
 Pursues him and his overthrow completes.

Like a proud eagle, his audacious flight,
 Wing'd with immortal pinions, tow'rd the pole
 He aims. His eyes are like the lightning bright;
 His talons God's own thunderbolts control,

Annihilating those base sons of earth,
 Who in false temples have false gods adored;
 Whose gods impure to rites impure gave birth,
 Who dare compare themselves with Israel's Lord.

Long, long have I pursued his ardent path;
 Now it behooves me once more to pursue
 His foes on earth; with heav'n-directed wrath
 To trample down and crush Philistia's crew.

And with th' assistance of the God of hosts,
 Prove that, as he, so I maintain his laws;
 And prove that now the camp of Israel boasts
 Two swords resistless in a righteous cause.

Here the evil spirit comes over Saul, who says:

Saul.—Who, who thus boasts? Is there, except my sword,
 Which I unsheathe, another in the camp?
 He's a blasphemer; let him perish, he
 Who dares defy it.

Michal.—Ah forbear, O heav'ns!

Jonathan.—Father, what wouldst thou do?

David.— Unhappy king!

Mich.—Ah fly! Ah fly! With difficulty we
Can hold him back. Dear husband, fly!

At the commencement of the fourth act Michal inquires from Jonathan whether David may yet return to her father's tent, but is told that, although the frenzy of the king has passed away, his anger still remains. Saul then enters and orders Michal to go in search of David, though, as she declares,

I have so well concealed him that no man
Will ever find him.

Saul turns to Jonathan and asks complainingly,

Lov'st thou thy father? . . .

Jonathan.— Father! . . . yes, I love thee:
But loving thee, I also love thy glory:
Hence sometimes I oppose, far as a son
Ought to oppose, thine impulses unjust.

Saul.—Often thy father's arm dost thou restrain:
But, thou dost turn against thyself that sword
Which thou avertest from another's breast.
Yes, yes, defend that David to the utmost;
Shortly will he . . . Dost thou not hear a voice
That in thy heart cries: "David will be king?"
—David? He shall be immolated first.

Jon.—And doth not God, with a more dreadful voice,
Cry in my heart: "My favorite is David;
He is the chosen of the Lord of hosts?"
Doth not each act of his confirm this truth?
Was not the frantic and invidious rage
Of Abner silenced by his mere approach?
And thou, when thou reënter'st in thyself,
Dost thou not find that, only at his presence,
All thy suspicions vanish like a cloud

Before the sun? And dost thou fondly dream,
 When the malignant spirit visits thee,
 That I restrain thy arm? 'Tis God restrains it.
 Scarcely wilt thou have levell'd at his breast
 Thy evil-brandish'd sword, when thou wilt be
 Forced to withdraw it suddenly: in tears
 Thou thyself prostrate at his feet wilt fall;
 Yes, father, thou, repentant: for thou art
 Indeed not impious. . . .

Saul.— But, too true thy words.

A strange, inexplicable mystery
 This David is to me. No sooner I
 In Elah had beheld him, than he pleased
 My eyes; but never, never won my heart.
 When I might almost be disposed to love him,
 A fierce repulsion shoots athwart my breast,
 And weans me from him. Scarcely do I wish
 For his destruction than, if I behold him,
 He straight disarms me, with such wonder fills me
 That in his presence I become as nothing. . . .
 Ah! this is surely, this the vengeance is
 Of the inscrutable Almighty hand!

The fifth act commences with Michal leading David from his retreat. She informs him that dangers are closing round him, and entreats him to fly and bear her along with him. David wishes to remain to fight with his countrymen, and to perish in the battle; but as soon as he hears that the blood of the priests has been shed by the order of Saul, that the camp is polluted and the ground stained with it, he acknowledges that he can never combat in this place, and resolves to fly. He is, however, unwilling to carry away with him a daughter who is her father's sole consolation, and he, therefore, supplicates and commands her to remain. Their sepa-

ration is tender and touching, and David takes his lonely way through the craggy passes of the mountains. Scarcely has he departed when Michal hears the sounds of conflict at the extremity of the camp, and groans proceeding from the tent of her father. Saul is again furious; the excess of his delirium is redoubled by the remorse which oppresses him. He sees the shade of Samuel menacing him, of Abimelech, and of the victims slain at Nob. His way is on every side obstructed by the bodies of the dead. He offers up his supplications and entreats that at least the anger of God may pass away from the heads of his children. His delirium is truly sublime, and the apparitions which torment him fill the imagination of the spectator. Suddenly the shades disappear; he hears only the cry of battle, which approaches nearer and nearer.

Saul.—Incensed, tremendous shade, ah, go thy way!

Leave, leave me! see, before thy feet I kneel.

Where can I fly? where can I hide myself?

O fierce, vindictive spectre, be appeased. . . .

But to my supplications it is deaf;

And does it spurn me? Burst asunder, earth,

Swallow me up alive. . . . Ah! that at least

The fierce and threatening looks of that dire shade

May not quite pierce me through.

Michal.—

From whom dost fly?

No one pursues thee. Dost thou see me not,

Father? dost thou not know me?

Saul.—

O most high,

Most holy priest, wilt thou that here I pause?

O Samuel, thou my real father once,

Dost thou command it? Prostrate, see, I fall

At thy supreme command. Thou, with thy hand,

Placedst the royal crown upon this head;
 Thou didst adorn it; strip it; strip it now
 Of all its honors; tread them under foot.
 But O . . . the flaming sword of God's revenge
 Which glares eternally before my eyes. . . .
 Thou, who canst do it, snatch it from me,
 O no, but from my children. Of my crime
 My children they are innocent.

Mich.—What art thou doing, father?

Be tranquil. . . . To thy daughter. . . .

Saul.—

I will have

My arms; what daughter? Now, thou dost obey me.

My helm, my spear, my shield; behold my children.

Mich.—I will not leave thee, no. . . .

Saul.—

The trumpets sound

Louder and louder! Thither let me go:

For me my sword alone will be sufficient.—

Thou, quit me, go; obey. I thither run:

There, where the death I seek for has its home.

Saul had resolved to engage in the ensuing morning; but it is yet night, and the Philistines are within his camp. Abner arrives with a handful of soldiers, and wishes to carry the king to the mountains, to a place of safety. The Philistines surprise the Israelites, and Jonathan perishes with all his brothers. The army is completely routed, and only a few moments' space remain for flight. Of this Saul obstinately refuses to take advantage; he orders Abner to bear Michal to a place of safety, forcing her to leave him, and then remains alone on the stage:

Oh my children,

I was a father.—See thyself alone,

O King! Of thy so many friends and servants,

Not one remains.—Inexorable God!
Is thy retributory wrath appeased?
But thou remain'st to me, O sword! Now come,
My faithful servant in extremity,
Hark! hark! the howling of the insolent victors!
The lightning of their burning torches glares
Before my eyes already, and I see
Their swords by thousands. Impious Philistine!
Thou shalt find me, but like a king, here, dead.

As Saul speaks these words he falls, transfixed by his own sword. The victorious Philistines surround him in a crowd, with blazing torches and bloody swords. While they are rushing with loud cries upon Saul, the curtain falls.

This tragedy is essentially different from the other dramas of Alfieri. It is conceived in the spirit of Shakespeare, and not of the French drama. It is not a conflict between passion and duty, which furnishes the plot. We find here a representation of a noble character, suffering under those weaknesses which sometimes accompany the greatest virtues, and governed by the fatality, not of destiny, but of human nature. There is very little action in the piece. Saul perishes, the victim, not of his passions, not of his crimes, but of his remorse, augmented by the terror which a gloomy imagination has cast over his soul. He is perhaps the only heroic madman who has been introduced into the classical drama; while, in the romantic theatre, Shakespeare and his followers have delineated with terrible truth this living death, far more shocking than actual dissolution; this melancholy catastrophe in the drama of real

life, which, though ennobled by the rank of its victim, is yet not confined to any one class, and, though exhibited to our eyes in a king, menaces all alike.

Alfieri's Latest Tragedies.

At the same time with *Saul* appeared the eight last tragedies of Alfieri. In *Mary Stuart* the scene is laid, not at the melancholy termination of her long captivity, but at the period when she entered into the conspiracy with Bothwell against her husband, and tarnished her fame with the blood of the unfortunate Darnley. *The Conspiracy of the Pazzi*, in 1478, to restore liberty to Florence, is the subject of the second of these pieces. The catastrophe is striking, and the situation of Bianca, the sister of the Medici and the wife of one of the Pazzi, distracted between her affection for her brothers and her husband, forms the chief interest of the drama. *Don Garcia* is also drawn from the history of the Medici, after that ambitious family had gained possession of the sovereign power. One of the sons of Cosmo I, Don Garcia, was the instrument of the terrible vengeance of his father, by whose order he slew with his own hand and in the obscurity of night, his brother, whom he did not know, and was himself, in his turn, put to death by the tyrant. The fourth tragedy is *Agis*, king of Sparta, whom the Ephori put to death for attempting to augment the privilege of the people and to place bounds to the power of the aristocracy. The next tragedy is the *Elder Brutus*, who condemned to death his own sons; the next, *Myrrha*, who died the

victim of her sinful passions. The last is founded on the story of the younger Brutus, one of the assassins of Cæsar.

Sophonisba.

Trissino's *Sophonisba*, first performed at Vicenza in 1514, was, as we have seen, the first regular tragedy produced on the Italian stage. It was highly commended by Sismondi, but denounced by Schlegel as the production of a "spiritless pedant." As treated by Alfieri the subject is worked up into one of his finest tragedies. The characters are Scipio Africanus, conqueror of Carthage; Syphax, king of Western Numidia, or Mauritania, who has been defeated and taken prisoner by Scipio, but was formerly his friend; Masinissa, king of Eastern Numidia, or Massylia, the ally of Scipio and enemy of Syphax; and Sophonisba, daughter of Asdrubal, the Carthaginian. She inherits all the hatred of Rome felt by her father and her uncle, Hannibal. Originally betrothed to Masinissa, during his absence she was given in marriage to Syphax, in order to secure his assistance against the Romans, the result being to drive Masinissa into the arms of Rome. The scene is the camp of Scipio in Africa, and the date 203 B. C., during the second Punic war.

In the fourth act Masinissa tells a faithful follower to keep a bowl of poison in readiness for use, and awaits an audience with Sophonisba. She tells him that Syphax is coming to see him, and that she herself intends to reunite her fortunes with her husband. He replies that he will never part with her. Syphax comes,

and Masinissa generously proposes to procure the escape of his rival and Sophonisba with the help of his Numidian troops, and to escort them safely to the walls of Carthage, avowing that he is solely instigated by his deep anxiety for Sophonisba's fate. Syphax refuses, and voluntarily offers to resign his wife to Masinissa, intending to slay himself.

Sophonisba.—

I expected

No more to see thee; and in truth I ought not;
But—when thou hear'st it, canst thou trust my words?—
Syphax himself enjoin'd it.

Masinissa.—

Was he moved

By scorn or pity?

Soph.—

Magnanimity;

More than enough to reawaken in us
A noble emulation. He himself
Would fain converse with thee; but he commands
That I precede him; and that . . .

Mas.—

Can I bear

A sight like this?

Soph.—

Art thou less great than he?

Fears he thy sight?

Mas.—

Nor can I tell thee first . . . ?

Soph.—What canst thou tell me that I ought to hear?

Mas.—In vain didst thou inflict on me new torments:

I would inform thee that I here enticed thee,
And that I would, at any cost, myself
Drag thee from hence.

Soph.—

I gave myself to thee,

Thou knowest it; from thee I take myself.

A lofty duty, fatal to myself,

Demands this sacrifice. I certain am,

By following Syphax, to withdraw myself

From ev'ry ill. Do thou, then, now from me

Learn to be strong. This is the camp of Rome;

Scipio is station'd here; a monarch, thou
 Art station'd here; and I am station'd here,
 Asdrubal's daughter. Tell me, wouldst thou **now**
 That ours should only be a vulgar love?

Mas.—Ah! with a flame far different to them
 My bosom is consumed. . . . In thee alone
 I place my fame, my glory and my greatness. . . .
 Thou shouldst be mine; although my kingdom perish;
 The whole world perish . . . mine thou shalt be. I
 Perils and losses neither know nor fear.
 I am prepared for all, except to lose thee;
 And sooner . . .

Soph.— With possession of my heart,
 Ah, be thou satisfied . . . prove not thyself
 Of this unworthy . . . but, what do I say?
 The sight, the sight alone of Syphax, pow'rless,
 Vanquish'd and captive, yet serene and firm,
 Will of itself restore thee to thy reason.

Mas.—Unhappy I! could I at least alone . . .
 But I am not less generous than you;
 I am, indeed, far different a lover;
 And I prepare to yield to you of this
 A memorable proof.

Soph.— See, here is Syphax.

Mas.—He, too, may hear me; nor will ye have then
 Courage to scorn me. (Enter Syphax.)

Masinissa.— Now before thine eyes,
 Syphax, thy mortal foe, presents himself;
 But thou beholdest him in such a state
 That he no more thy indignation merits.

Syphax.—All indignation from a king in chains
 Would be but foolishness. If in my presence
 My rival formerly had shown himself,
 While I possess'd a sword, I might have then
 Display'd to him no inefficient wrath:
 Now cruel fate hath nothing left to me
 But a firm visage and impassive heart.
 Hence shalt thou hear me speak to thee with mildness.

Mas.—My desperate, immeasurable grief
Should be to thee no trifling consolation:
Then learn what that grief is.—See me: I am
Far more enchain'd than thou art, far more vanquish'd,
More stripp'd of judgment, and far less a king.
Thou tookest formerly my realm, but then
Thou wert not, as thou'rt now, my conqueror:
An indefatigable foe, more fierce,
More ardent, always I arose again
From my defeats: till I alternately
Became a conqueror, regain'd my own,
And took thy kingdom.—But do thou exult,
And triumph; for this noble woman now,
Whom thou hast twice from Masinissa snatch'd,
Gives thee the palm of perfect triumph o'er me.

In the last act Scipio tells Masinissa that his plan has been disclosed to him by Sophonisba herself, when she found that Syphax had destroyed himself. Sophonisba protests to Masinissa that nothing now will induce her to live, and that if he will not provide her with the means of carrying out her design she will kill herself by starvation. Finding all his entreaties useless, he calls for the bowl of poison and allows her to drink it, on condition that she leaves enough for him also. She, however, drains it to the dregs, and he is in the act of stabbing himself when Scipio rushes in and disarms him.

Alfieri's Comedies.

The comedies of Alfieri, of which there are six, are not adapted to the stage. It is, indeed, difficult to conceive how this celebrated man could have entertained

the idea of making comedy a vehicle for his political sentiments. The four first, which are in fact only one drama divided into four parts, are written to illustrate the monarchical, the aristocratic, the democratic and the mixed form of government. He has entitled them, *One, Few, Too Many* and *The Antidote*. They are all in iambics, as are his tragedies. The scene of the first is laid in Persia, and the subject is the election of Darius to the throne by the neighing of his horse. The drama turns upon the fraud of Darius' groom, who, by an artifice, makes his master's steed neigh before any of the others; and the king's ingratitude in sacrificing his horse to the sun, and then raising a statue to him, forms the catastrophe. The scene of the second, the drama of aristocracy, is laid at Rome, in the house of the Gracchi, and the subject is the contest between them and Fabius for the consulate. Their defeat and humiliation induce them to propose an Agrarian law. The scene of the third comedy, *Democracy*, or *Too Many*, is laid at the court of Alexander, and the orators are introduced who have been despatched to the king by the Athenians. These orators are ten in number, and are divided into two parties, of which Demosthenes and Æschines are the leaders; and they are in turn courted and mocked by Alexander and his courtiers. Their baseness, their jealousy and their venality are fully displayed in the drama, which, however, can hardly be said to boast of any action. The play of *Mixed Government*, or, as it is singularly entitled, *Mix Three Poisons and You Will Have the Antidote*, is a plot of his own invention, and the scene is laid in one of the Orcades.

It was, to a certain extent, a new idea to choose heroic characters to fill the parts in comedy. Alfieri has expressed his dislike to what may be termed the drama of common life as debasing to dramatic art, and associating poetry with vulgar sentiments and circumstances. It is strange, however, that he should himself have felt no disgust at attributing vulgarity of manners, of feeling and language to men whose very names, rendered so familiar by history, lead us to expect from them something elevated and noble. He seems to have thought it necessary to introduce into his comedies the most distinguished men, merely to display their low and vulgar qualities. He has endued them with all the passions which their rank should have caused them most anxiously to conceal; he has attributed to them language which they would have blushed to hear, and he expects to excite laughter by exposing the poverty and often the grossness of great men's wit. To make vice ridiculous it is not necessary to excite repugnance, but the author produces in the reader a deep disgust for the society into which he is introduced, and a humiliating sense of the depravity of the human race, which even in the highest ranks can be thus debased.

Of the two remaining comedies of Alfieri, the one entitled *La Finestrina* is very fantastical; the scene is laid in hell, and the comedy, in fact, consists of the dialogues of the dead dramatized. The other is entitled *The Divorce*, not because a divorce is the subject of the piece, but because the author concludes by laying down a maxim that a marriage in Italy puts the parties upon precisely the same footing as a divorce elsewhere. This

is the only one of his dramas which can fairly be classed with modern comedies. The characters are finely drawn, and it contains a true but very severe representation of Italian manners. All the personages are more or less vicious, and there is, therefore, very little gayety in the piece, for it is impossible to laugh at anything which powerfully excites our indignation. The writer manifests in these dramas the powers of a great satirist, but not of a successful dramatist.

Posthumous Works.

The thirteen octavo volumes of Alfieri's posthumous works, published in 1804, occupied the attention of the literati of Europe, without adding much to his fame. In his *Abel*, a musical drama, which he terms a Tramelogedy—whatever that may mean—he has attempted to blend together the lyric and tragic styles, but the allegory is fatiguing on the stage, and the verses of Alfieri are not the most suitable of all poetry to set to music. There are two tragedies founded on the story of Alcestis, one translated from Euripides and the other recast and treated in his own manner. In the latter conjugal tenderness is beautifully depicted, and the intervention of supernatural powers and of the chorus, with a happy termination, give to it a pleasing character, though the seal of genius is not so strongly impressed as on his earlier tragedies. A volume of satires met with greater success than all his other compositions, notwithstanding their occasional obscurity and ruggedness of style; for the author's cynicism freely shows itself in

his writings, when not inconsistent with dignity. There are also numerous translations from classic authors, written after Alfieri had renounced dramatic composition and for want of other occupation had betaken himself to the study of Greek.

Alfieri's Autobiography.

The two last volumes contain the life of Alfieri, written by himself, with that warmth, vivacity and truth of feeling which throw such a charm over his confessions, and which never fail to interest the reader, although the author, honestly displaying his faults, sometimes appears in no very amiable light. The study of the human heart is always interesting, and doubly so when it presents us with portraits of men whose genius tinctures everything that it touches; who have, from time to time, influenced the opinions of their contemporaries; who have struck out new paths, led the way to new glories and created new schools of poetry; who, having impressed their character upon the age in which they lived, are cited by posterity as constituting the glory of their times. It is only in his memoirs that we become acquainted with Alfieri. Extracts from them can give no adequate idea of the seething impatience of character which incessantly propelled him toward some indefinite object; of the melancholy agitation of spirit which affected him in every relation of society, in every situation of life, and in every country; of the imperious craving which he ever felt in his soul for something more free in politics, more elevated in char-

acter, more devoted in love, more perfect in friendship; of the longing for another existence, for another universe, which he vainly sought as he travelled, with all the rapidity of a courier, from one extremity of Europe to the other, and of his thirst for that poetical creation which he was unable to satisfy, until, casting off the passions of his youth, his thoughts turned to the contemplation of the new universe which he had created in his own bosom, and the agitation of his soul was calmed by the production of those masterpieces which have immortalized his name.

VI.

The Drama in the Nineteenth Century.

The French revolution modified all European literature by altering the environment of men of letters, supplying them with themes and ideas which could not otherwise have come within their scope, and inspiring them with vehement passions according as their circumstances and temperaments led them to champion the new gospel or rally to the support of ancient traditions. Italy was one of the last countries to feel its effects in the literary sphere, chiefly because it did not, as elsewhere, originate in the land itself, but was thrust upon it by an invader whose oppression alienated much of the patriotic sentiment that would otherwise have welcomed the movement. Many of the Italian writers whose careers were powerfully affected by it were neither revolutionists nor anti-revolutionists, but as straws in a whirlpool. When, however, the idea of Italian unity—Napoleon's legacy to his true native country—had time to develop itself, and it had become manifest that the only path to it lay through a cordial adoption of revolutionary principles, the revolution acquired more practical significance for Italy than for any other country in the world.

In a certain respect, Alfieri may be considered as the first representative of both the sentimental and the national tendencies in modern Italian literature. He had denounced tyranny and extolled liberty while the Bastille had yet many years to stand; and if he could not write like Goethe or Rousseau, he had practically lived, and recorded in his autobiography, a life of sentiment and passion. The air of the revolution, nevertheless, was needed to bring these germs to maturity.

Vincenzo Monti.

Vincenzo Monti is far from being a champion of the revolution, for his celebrated poem, the *Basviliانا*, is a denunciation of it, and, although he afterward changed sides, the republic was for him merely a transition to the empire. Nevertheless, he personifies, in a measure, Italy herself, amid the gusts of the revolutionary tempest, tossed to and fro between contending influences, her sails spread to the sky, her anchor still cleaving to earth. Born in the district of Ferrara and having gone through the ordeal so often exacted from poets of distasteful law-study, he repaired to Rome as a literary adventurer, and by his beautiful lyrics, adapted for recitation, sang himself into the good graces of the papal court. He took a yet higher flight in his tragedy of *Aristodemo*, which appeared in 1787. It is rather lyrical than dramatic, and as superior to Alfieri in versification as inferior in virile energy. The hero, who, to gain the suffrages of his fellow-citizens, and so attain regal power, has voluntarily offered up his daughter as

a sacrifice to the gods, appears upon the stage, fifteen years after the commission of this crime, devoured with remorse at having outraged nature to serve his ambition. The union of this remorse with the heroism which he displays in his public capacity, and with his affection toward another daughter, who has long been lost to him and whom he believes to be a Spartan captive, affords ample opportunity for fine acting and for producing strong emotion; but, in truth, there is very little action in the drama, which is filled with negotiations with the envoy of Sparta, and when at the conclusion he kills himself, his death is caused rather by his fifteen years of remorse than by anything which passes in the five acts of the tragedy. Yet we recognize the school of Alfieri in the loftiness of the characters, in the energy of the sentiments, in the simplicity of the action so devoid of incident, in the absence of all external pomp and in the interest sustained without the assistance of love. We likewise remark the peculiar talent of Monti, in which he excelled Alfieri; his harmony, his elegance and his poetical language, which, while they charm our minds, never fail to delight our ear.

Monti wrote another tragedy, entitled *Galeotto Manfredi*, the substance of which is drawn from the Italian chronicles of the fifteenth century—a period so fertile in tyrants and in crimes, when the prince of Faenza, the victim of his wife's jealousy, was assassinated by her order and under her own eyes. In this drama, likewise, Monti approaches Alfieri in the nakedness of the action, in the energy of the characters and in the eloquence of the sentiments. He has adhered but too

closely to his model in the neglect of all local coloring, and thus was lost an excellent opportunity of presenting to the spectators a lively picture of the Italians of the middle age.

Alessandro Manzoni.

Manzoni, though an Austrian subject, was born at Milan in 1784, and inherited from his father the title of count, which he always refused to wear. In youth he was a liberal thinker in religious matters, and by the stricter Catholics was classed as a Voltairean, not, as it seems, without grounds. He led the life of a respectable Italian gentleman of moderate fortune, at one time greatly impaired by his father's extravagance, and basked for nearly half a century in the tranquil enjoyment of fame, which, after the success of *I Promessi Sposi*, he imperilled by no further venture. "Formerly," he said, "the Muse came after me; now I should have to go after her." In 1808 he married the daughter of a Geneva banker, who, having herself been converted from Protestantism to the Catholic faith, converted her husband in turn. She was long remembered in Milan "for her fresh blond head and her blue eyes, her lovely eyes," and made her husband happy while she lived. Manzoni signalized his devotion and his new faith in his *Sacred Hymns*, published in 1815.

In 1820 Manzoni produced his first tragedy, *Il Conte di Carmagnola*, a romantic drama written in the boldest defiance of the unities of time and place, dispensing with these hitherto indispensable conditions of dramatic composition several years before Victor Hugo braved

their tyranny in his *Cromwell*. In an introduction he gives his reasons for this daring innovation. Following the *Carmagnola* came his second and last tragedy, the *Adelchi*. Meanwhile he had written his magnificent ode, *Il Cinque Maggio*, the subject of which was the death of Napoleon. It was at once translated by Goethe, was recognized by the French as the last word on the subject, and it was then that Manzoni began to be acknowledged as the head of the entire Romantic school. In 1825 he published his romance, *I Promessi Sposi*, known to all Italians and translated into all modern languages. Except for a few earlier poems, he only added to his works some essays on historical and religious subjects.

Manzoni had a very quiet and uneventful life. He was very fond of the country, and in the early spring of every year he left the city for his farm, whose labors he directed and shared. His life was, indeed, so peaceful, and his fate so happy, in contrast with that of Pellico and other literary contemporaries, that he was accused of indifference in political matters. "There are countries," says Monnier, "where it is a shame not to be persecuted." To this class belonged Manzoni.

"Goethe's praise," says a sneer which has been turned into a proverb, "is a brevet of mediocrity," and though Manzoni was anything but mediocre, he was in fact the only Italian who won the applause of the great German poet. Goethe could not praise Manzoni's tragedies too highly. "He did not find in them one word too much or too little, while the style was free, noble, full and rich." Yet they had no success on the stage. The *Car-*

magnola was given in Florence in 1828, but, in spite of the favor of the court, it failed; at Turin, where the *Adelchi* was brought out, Pellico regretted that the attempt had been made, and deplored the "vile irreverence of the public."

Both tragedies deal with patriotic themes, and both are concerned with remote occurrences. The time of the *Carmagnola* is the fifteenth century; that of the *Adelchi*, the eighth; and however strongly marked are the personages, differing widely in this respect from most characters of Italian classic tragedy, we still feel that they are subordinate to the great contests of elements and principles for which the dramas furnished a scene. The chief fault in Manzoni's works is that they are not acting plays, but their merits are much greater than the majority of such plays can boast. There are many affecting scenes, and the whole of each tragedy is conceived in the highest ideal of dramatic art.

Carmagnola.

In the *Carmagnola* the action extends from the moment when the Venetian senate, at war with the duke of Milan, places its armies under the command of the count, who is a soldier of fortune and has formerly been in the service of the duke. The senate sends two commissioners into his camp to represent the state there, and to be spies upon his conduct. This was a somewhat clumsy contrivance of the republic to give a patriotic character to its armies, which were often recruited from mercenaries and generaled by them; and,

of course, the hireling leaders must always have chafed under the surveillance. After the battle of Maclodio, in which the Venetian mercenaries defeated the Milanese, the victors, according to the custom of their trade, began to free their comrades of the other side whom they had taken prisoners. The commissioners protested, but Carmagnola answered that it was the usage of his soldiers and he could not forbid it; he went further, and himself liberated some remaining prisoners. His action was duly reported to the senate, and as he had formerly been in the service of the duke of Milan, whose kinswoman he had married, he was suspected of treason. He was invited to Venice and received with great honor, and conducted with every flattering ceremony to the hall of the Grand Council. After a brief delay, sufficient to exclude Carmagnola's followers, the doge ordered him to be seized, and upon a summary trial he was put to death.

In *Carmagnola* the interest of love is entirely wanting, and herein it differs very widely from Schiller's play of *Wallenstein's Camp*, which otherwise it much resembles. Manzoni's soldiers are simply soldiers, and this singleness of motive is in harmony with the Italian conception of art. Yet the Carmagnola of Manzoni is by no means like the heroes of the Alfierian tragedy. He is a man, not merely embodied passion or mood; his character is rounded and has all the checks and counterpoises, the inconsistencies, in a word, without which nothing actually lives in literature and hardly lives in the world.

The tragedy ends with a scene in the prison, where

Carmagnola awaits his wife and daughter, who are coming with one of his old comrades, Gonzaga, to bid him a last farewell. These passages present the poet in his tenderer moods.

Count.—(Speaking of his wife and daughter.) By this time they must know my fate. Ah! why

Might I not die far from them? Dread, indeed,
Would be the news that reached them, but, at least,
The darkest hour of agony would be past,
And now it stands before us. We must needs
Drink the draught drop by drop. O open fields,
O liberal sunshine, O uproar of arms,
O joy of peril, O trumpets, and the cries
Of combatants. O my true steed! 'midst you
'T were fear to die; but now I go rebellious
To meet my destiny, driven to my doom
Like some vile criminal, uttering on the way
Impotent vows, and pitiful complaints.

* * * * *

But I shall see my dear ones once again,
And, alas! hear their moans; the last adieu
Hear from their lips—shall find myself once more
Within their arms—then part from them forever.
They come! O God, bend down from heaven on them
One look of pity.

Enter Antonietta, Matilde and Gonzaga.

Antonietta.—

My husband!

Matilde.—

O my father!

Ant.—Ah, thus thou comest back! Is this the moment
So long desired?

Count.—

O poor souls! Heaven knows
That only for your sake is it dreadful to me.
I who so long am used to look on death,
And to expect it, only for your sakes

Do I need courage. And you, you will not surely
 Take it away from me? God, when he makes
 Disaster fall on the innocent, he gives, too,
 The heart to bear it. Ah! let yours be equal
 To your affliction now! Let us enjoy
 This last embrace—it likewise is Heaven's gift.
 Daughter, thou weepest; and thou, wife! Oh, when
 I chose thee mine, serenely did thy days
 Glide on in peace; but made I thee companion
 Of a sad destiny. And it is this thought
 Embitters death to me. Would that I could not
 See how unhappy I have made thee!

Ant.— O husband
 Of my glad days, thou mad'st them glad! My heart,—
 Yes, thou may'st read it!—I die of sorrow! Yet
 I could not wish that I had not been thine.

Cou.—O love, I know how much I lose in thee:
 Make me not feel it now too much.

Mat.— The murderers!

Cou.—No, no, my sweet Matilde; let not those
 Fierce cries of hatred and of vengeance rise
 From out thine innocent soul. Nay, do not mar
 These moments; they are holy; the wrong's great,
 But pardon it, and thou shalt see in 'midst of ills
 A lofty joy remaining still. My death,
 The cruelest enemy could do no more
 Than hasten it. Oh surely men did never
 Discover death, for they had made it fierce
 And insupportable! It is from Heaven
 That it doth come, and Heaven accompanies it,
 Still with such comfort as men cannot give
 Nor take away. O daughter and dear wife,
 Hear my last words! All bitterly, I see,
 They fall upon your hearts. But you one day will have
 Some solace in remembering them together.
 Dear wife, live thou; conquer thy sorrow, live;
 Let not this poor girl utterly be orphaned.
 Fly from this land, and quickly; to thy kindred
 Take her with thee. She is their blood; to them

Thou once wast dear, and when thou didst become
 Wife of their foe, only less dear; the cruel
 Reasons of state have long time made adverse
 The names of Carmagnola and Visconti;
 But thou go'st back unhappy; the sad cause
 Of hate is gone. Death's a great peacemaker!
 And thou, my tender flower, that to my arms
 Wast wont to come and make my spirit light,
 Thou bow'st thy head? Aye, aye, the tempest rears
 Above thee! Thou dost tremble, and thy breast
 Is shaken with thy sobs. Upon my face
 I feel thy burning tears fall down on me,
 And cannot wipe them from thy tender eyes.

. . . Thou seem'st to ask
 Pity of me, Matilda. Ah! thy father
 Can do naught for thee. But there is in heaven,
 There is a Father thou know'st for the forsaken;
 Trust him and live on tranquil if not glad.

* * * * *

Gonzaga, I offer thee this hand, which often
 Thou hast pressed upon the morn of battle, when
 We know not if we e'er should meet again:
 Wilt press it now once more, and give to me
 Thy faith that thou wilt be defence and guard
 Of these poor women, till they are returned
 Unto their kinsmen?

Gonzaga.— I do promise thee.

Cou.—When thou go'st back to camp,
 Salute my brothers for me; and say to them
 That I die innocent; witness thou hast been
 Of all my deeds and thoughts—thou knowest it.
 Tell them that I did never stain my sword
 With treason—I did never stain it—and
 I am betrayed.—And when the trumpets blow,
 And when the banners beat against the wind,
 Give thou a thought to thine old comrade then!
 And on some mighty day of battle, when
 Upon the field of slaughter the priest lifts
 His hands amid the doleful noises, offering up
 The sacrifice to heaven for the dead,

Bethink thyself of me, for I, too, thought
To die in battle.

Ant.— O God, have pity on us!

Cou.—O wife! Matilde! now the hour is near
We needs must part. Farewell!

Mat.— No, father——

Cou.— Yet

Once more, come to my heart! Once more, and now,
In mercy, go!

Ant.— Ah, no! they shall unclasp us
By force!

(A sound of armed men is heard without.)

Mat.—What sound is that?

Ant.— Almighty God!

(The door opens in the middle; armed men are seen.
Their leader advances toward the count; the
women swoon.)

Cou.—Merciful God! Thou hast removed from them
This cruel moment, and I thank Thee! Friend,
Succor them, and from this unhappy place
Bear them! And when they see the light again,
Tell them that nothing more is left to fear.

Some of the finest of Manzoni's lyrics are also to be found in his *Carmagnola* and *Adelchi*. It may, indeed, be said of these tragedies that they form of themselves an epoch in Italian literature, less for their intrinsic merit than as the first attempt to adapt Shakespearean methods to the Italian stage. The *Carmagnola* depicts the condottieri of the fifteenth century, and the *Adelchi* the Lombards of the eighth. The latter is the more dramatic, and the two principal characters, Adelchi and Ermengarda, are depicted with remarkable beauty and power. Both pieces are more like dramatic poems than tragedies, rising to their highest when there is most

scope for poetical imagination. Especially fine are the fire and spirit of the martial lyrics, with their "wonderful plunging metre." Very skilfully, also, is painted the lot of the Italian people, transferred by the fortune of war from a Lombard master to a Frank, and oppressed by both. The contemporary application is sufficiently evident, as will appear in the following verses:

From moss-covered ruin of edifice nameless,
From forests, from furnaces idle and flameless,
 From furrows bedewed with the sweat of the slave,
A people dispersed doth arouse and awaken,
With senses all straining and pulses all shaken,
 At a sound of strange clamor that swells like a wave.

In visages pallid, and eyes dim and shrouded,
As blinks the pale sun through a welkin beclouded,
 The might of their fathers a moment is seen
In eye and in countenance doubtfully blending,
The shame of the present seems doubly contending
 With pride in the thought of a past that hath been.

Now they gather in hope to disperse panic-stricken,
And in tortuous ways their pace slacken or quicken,
 As 'twixt longing and fear they advance or stand still,
Gazing once and again where, despairing and scattered,
The host of their tyrants flies broken and shattered
 From the wrath of the swords that are drinking their
 fill.

As wolves that the hunter hath cowed and subjected,
Their hair on their hides in dire horror erected,
 So these to their covert distractedly fly;
And hope springs anew in the breast of the peasant;
O'ertaking the future in joy of the present,
 He deems his chain broken, and broken for aye.

Nay, hearken! Yon heroes in victory warring,
From refuge and rescue the routed debarring,
By path steep and rugged have come from afar,
Forsaking the halls of their festive carousing,
From downy repose on soft couches arousing,
In haste to obey the shrill summons of war.

They have left in their castles their wives broken-hearted,
Who, striving to part, still refused to be parted,
With pleadings and warnings that died on the tongue.
The war-dinted helmet the brow hath surmounted,
And soon the dark chargers are saddled and mounted,
And hollow the bridge to their gallop hath rung.

From land unto land they have speeded and fled,
With lips that the lay of the soldier repeated,
But hearts that have harbored their home and its
bowers.
They have watched, they have starved, by grim discipline driven,
And hauberk and helm have been battered and riven,
And arrows around them have whistled in showers.

And deem ye, poor fools! that the meed and the guerdon
That lured from afar were to lighten your burden,
Your wrongs to abolish, your fate to reverse?
Go back to the wrecks of your palaces stately,
To the forges whose glow ye extinguished so lately,
To the field ye have tilled in the sweat of your curse!

The victor and vanquished, in amity knitted,
Have doubled the yoke to your shoulders refitted;
One tyrant had quelled you, and now ye have twain.
They cast forth the lot for the serf and the cattle,
They throng on the sods that yet bleed from their battle,
And the soil and the hind are their servants again.

Manzoni's claim to universal veneration was threefold.
In the first place, he was really a great writer; in the

second, he was the standard-bearer of Italian literature, the one contemporary author of his nation who could be named along with Goethe and Byron; thirdly and chiefly, he represented the most important intellectual movement of the post-Napoleon age—the romantic and mediæval reaction. The middle age was, indeed, no model for the nineteenth century, as the romanticists and reactionaries thought, but it possessed elements indispensable for the enrichment of the national life; and no Italian could forget that the greatest of his countrymen was also the greatest and most representative writer of the mediæval era.

VII.

Recent and Contemporary Drama.

For at least half a century after the downfall of Napoleon I the history of European literature is largely that of writers and writings contending with despotic governments and the various sinister interests which strove to restore the condition of affairs prevailing before the French revolution. In all ages and countries literature has usually been on the side of freedom, which is to it as the breath of life, and men of letters, except those who prostitute their talents, are, by instinct, partisans of liberty. Many of the world's most famous authors, while their political principles might favor a reactionary tendency, did not encourage it in their writings. Scott, Coleridge, Goethe and Chateaubriand, for instance, though reactionary in politics, were, in their literary spheres, innovators and iconoclasts, showing no leaning toward the perpetuation of the ancient régime of church and state. Niebuhr sincerely deplored the tendency of the times, but by proving the legendary character of the early history of Rome, did more to unsettle allegiance to tradition than all the wit and malice of Heine. Thus the literature of the nineteenth cen-

tury, after its opening decades, was a powerful liberating force, and at the same time favorable to sound conservatism.

Patriotic Literature.

In Italy literature was unequivocally on the side of liberty, but its expression was more restrained than elsewhere, for Italian writers could only obtain liberty of speech at the price of exile. Yet love of country is always the dominant thought, which colors it throughout, as the soil colors the flowers. In addition to the names already mentioned, there was a host of less prominent authors, who were animated with patriotic feelings, and it is rather this pervading tone than any remarkable excellence that gives dignity to recent Italian literature. The one apparent exception was rather seeming than real. The Catholic reaction, which followed the revolution almost as a necessary consequence, was not considered by men of letters as illiberal or unpatriotic. Many of the most eminent writers were fervent Catholics.

When later the school of Romantic poets and novelists was practically dispersed by the Austrian police, the literary spirit of the nation took refuge under the mild and careless despotism of the grand dukes of Florence. In 1821 Austria was mistress of nearly all of Italy. She held in her grasp the provinces of Lombardy and Venetia; she had garrisons in Naples, Piedmont and the Romagna, and Rome was ruled according to her will. But there is always something defective in the vigilance of a policeman; and in the

very place which, perhaps, Austria thought it quite needless to guard, the restless and indomitable spirit of free thought entered. It was in Tuscany, a fief of the Holy Roman Empire, reigned over by a family set on the grand-ducal throne by Austria herself, and united to her Hapsburgs by many ties, that a new literary life began for Italy. The Leopoldine code was especially mild toward criminals, and the Lorrainaise princes did not show themselves crueler than they could help toward poets, essayists and that class of malefactors. Indeed, it was the policy of their family to leave matters alone, and the grand duke, restored after the fall of Napoleon, while he was an absolute monarch, was also an honest man. Though there were spies and a censorship in Florence, there was also indulgence, and if it was not altogether a pleasant place for literary men it was at least tolerable, and there they gathered from their exile and their silence throughout Italy.

Niccolini.

Giambattista Niccolini, born in 1782, near Pistoja, was of poor but noble parentage. After leaving school, he continued his studies in the university of Pisa, and soon showed himself a poet. His first tragedies, five or six in number, were written in the classic style of Alfieri, but though all were popular at the time, only one—the *Medea*—survived. While still a youth, he attracted the attention of Ugo Foscolo, who dedicated to him one of his works.

Niccolini's first political tragedy was his *Nebuchad-*

nezzar, which was printed in London in 1819, and figured, under that scriptural disguise, the career of Napoleon. It was followed by *Antonio Foscari*, in which the author, who had heretofore been a classicist, tried to reconcile that school with the Romantic by violating the sacred unities. His next drama, *Ludovico il Moro*, is in many respects a touching and effective tragedy, carefully preserving the historical truth, though we cannot entirely relish the extravagance of its high patriotic flavor.

Giovanni da Procida.

In his *Giovanni da Procida* Niccolini set himself to the purpose of awakening a Tuscan hatred of foreign rule. The subject is the expulsion of the French from Sicily, and its first representations raised the Florentines to a frenzy of theatrical patriotism. The tragedy ends with the Sicilian Vespers, but is chiefly concerned with preceding events, largely imagined by the poet, and the historical persons are more or less historically painted. Giovanni da Procida, a great Sicilian nobleman, supposed to be dead by the French, comes home to Palermo, after long exile, to stir up the Sicilians to rebellion, and finds that his daughter is married to the son of one of the French rulers, though neither his daughter, Imelda, nor her husband, Tancredi, knew the origin of the latter at the time of their marriage. Procida, in his all-absorbing hate of the oppressors, cannot forgive them; yet he saves Tancredi's life from an impending massacre of the French by imprisoning him in his castle, and in a scene with Imelda he tells her

that, while she was a babe, the father of Tancredi had abducted her mother and carried her to France. Years afterward she returned heart-broken to die in her husband's arms, a secret which she tries to reveal perishing with her. While Imelda remains horror-struck at this disclosure, Procida receives an intercepted letter from Tancredi's father, in which he tells the young man that he and Imelda are children of the same mother. Procida, in pity of the victim of this awful fatality, prepares to send her away to a convent in Pisa, but a French law forbids any ship to sail at that time, and Imelda is brought back and confronted in a public place with Tancredi, who has been rescued by the French. He claims her as his wife, but she, filled with horror of what she knows, declares that he is not her husband. It is the moment of the Vespers, and Tancredi falls among the first slain by the Sicilians. He implores Imelda for a last kiss, but wildly answering that they are brother and sister, she swoons away, while Tancredi dies in this climax of despair.

The management of the plot is very simple, and the feelings of the characters in the hideous maze which involves them are given only such expression as should come from those utterly broken by their calamity. Imelda swoons when she hears the fatal tie of blood that binds her to her husband. When she is restored she finds her father weeping over her and says:

Ah, thou dost look on me
And weep! At least this comfort I can feel
In the horror of my state: thou canst not hate
A woman so unhappy.

Oh, from all

Be hid the atrocity! to take some holy shelter
 Let me be taken far from hence. I feel
 Naught can be more than my calamity,
 Saving God's pity. I have no father now,
 Nor child, nor husband (heavens, what do I say?
 He is my brother now! and well I know
 I must not ask to see him more). I, living, lose
 Everything death robs other women of.

Niccolini does not often use pathos, and he is on that account perhaps the more effective in the use of it. Very touching is the passage where, after coming back from his long exile, Procida says to Imelda, who is trembling for the secret of her marriage amid her joy in his return:

Daughter, art thou still

So sad? I have not yet heard from thy lips
 A word of the old love. . . .
 . . . Ah, thou knowest not
 What sweetness hath the natal spot, how many
 The longings exile hath; how heavy 'tis
 To arrive at doors of homes where no one waits thee!
 Melda, thou may'st abandon thine own land,
 But not forget her; I, a pilgrim, saw
 Many a city; but none among them had
 A memory that spoke unto my heart;
 And fairer still than any other seemed
 The country whither still my spirit turned.

In a vein as fierce and passionate as this is tender, Procida relates how, returning to Sicily when he was believed dead by the French, he passed in secret over the island and inflamed Italian hatred of the foreigners:

I sought the pathless woods,
And drew the cowards thence, and made them blush,
And then made fury follow on their shame.
I hailed the peasant in his fertile fields,
Where 'neath the burden of the cruel tribute,
He dropped from famine 'midst the harvest sheaves,
With his starved brood: "Open thou with thy scythe
The breasts of Frenchmen; let the earth no more
Be fertile to our tyrants." I found my way
In palaces, in hovels; tranquil, I
Both great and lowly did make drunk with rage.
I knew the art to call forth cruel tears
In every eye, to wake in every heart
A love of slaughter, a ferocious need
Of blood. And in a thousand strong right hands
Glitter the arms I gave.

"With this tragedy," says an Italian biographer of Niccolini, "the poet touched all chords of the human heart, from the most impassioned love to the most implacable hate. The enthusiasm rose to the greatest height, and for as many nights of the severe winter of 1830 as the tragedy was given, the theatre was always thronged by an overflowing audience, the doors being opened to the impatient people many hours before the spectacle began. Spectators thought themselves fortunate to secure a seat next to the roof of the playhouse; even in the prompter's hole—on the Italian stage the prompter rises from a hole behind the foot-lights, hidden by a canvas screen—places were sought to witness the admired work. And while they wept over the ill-starred love of Imelda, and all hearts palpitated in the touching situation in the drama—where the public and the personal interests so wonderfully blended, and the

vengeance of a people mingled with that of a man outraged in the most sacred affections of the heart—Procida rose terrible as the billows of his sea, imprecating before all the wrongs of their oppressed country, in whatever servitude inflicted, by whatever aliens, among all those that had trampled, derided and martyred her, and raising the cry of resistance that stirred the heart of all Italy. At the picture of the abject sufferings of their common country, the whole audience rose and repeated with tears of rage:

Why should heaven smile so glorious over
The land of our infamous woes?

Arnaldo da Brescia.

In 1843 Niccolini published his great tragedy, *Arnaldo da Brescia*, which was a response to the ideas of the papal school of patriots. After *Arnaldo* came the *Filippo Strozzi*, *Beatrice Cenci*, a version of Shelley's drama, and *Mario e i Cimbri*.

Arnaldo was performed in Florence in 1858, almost on the eve of the war which established Italian freedom. The name of Cocomero theatre had been changed to the Teatro Niccolini, and, in spite of governmental anxiety and opposition, the occasion was made a popular demonstration in favor of Niccolini and his ideas. His biographer says: "The audience now maintained a religious silence; now, moved by irresistible force, broke out into uproarious applause as the eloquent protests of the friar and the insolent responses of the pope awak-

ened their interest; for Italy then, like the unhappy martyr, had risen to proclaim the decline of that monstrous power which, in the name of a religion profaned by it, sanctifies its own illegitimate and feudal origin, its abuses, its pride, its vices, its crimes. It was a beautiful and affecting spectacle to see the illustrious poet receiving the warm congratulations of his fellow-citizens, who enthusiastically recognized in him the utterer of so many lofty truths and the prophet of Italy. That night Niccolini was accompanied to his house by the applauding multitude." All this may have been only such honor as the Florentines were accustomed to pay to a pretty ballerina or a successful prima donna; but the worth of the poet was not lessened by the cheapening of popular applause. The two remaining years of Niccolini's life were passed in retirement, and with a sense of satisfaction with the fortunes of Italy marred only by the fact that the French still remained in Rome and that the temporal power of the pope had not been abolished.

In *Arnaldo da Brescia* Niccolini has poured out all the lifelong hatred and distrust he had felt for the temporal power of the popes. This we shall best understand through a sketch of the life of Arnaldo, who is really one of the most heroic figures of the past, deserving to rank far above Savonarola, and with the leaders of the Reformation, though he preceded these nearly four hundred years. He was born in Brescia of Lombardy about the year 1105, and was partly educated in France, in the school of the famous Abelard. He early embraced the ecclesiastical life, and, when he

returned to his own country, entered a convent, but not to waste his time in idleness and the corruptions of his order. In fact, he began at once to preach against these, and against the usurpation of temporal power by all the great and little dignitaries of the church. He thus identified himself with the democratic side in politics, which was then locally arrayed against the bishop aspiring to rule Brescia. Arnaldo denounced the political power of the pope, as well as that of the prelates; and the bishop, making this known to the pontiff at Rome, had sufficient influence to procure a sentence against Arnaldo as a schismatic, and an order enjoining silence upon him. He was also banished from Italy, whereupon, retiring to France, he got himself into further trouble by aiding Abelard in the defence of his teachings, which had been attainted of heresy.

Both Abelard and Arnaldo were at this time bitterly persecuted by St. Bernard, and Arnaldo took refuge in Switzerland, whence, after several years, he passed to Rome, and there began to assume an active part in the popular movements against the papal rule. He was an ardent republican, and was a useful and efficient partisan, teaching openly that, while the pope was to be respected in all spiritual things, he was not to be recognized at all as a temporal prince. When the English monk, Nicholas Breakspear, became Pope Adrian IV, he excommunicated and banished Arnaldo; but Arnaldo, protected by the senate and certain powerful nobles, remained at Rome in spite of the pope's decree, and disputed the lawfulness of the excommunication. Finally, the whole city was laid under interdict until

Arnaldo should be driven out. Holy week was drawing near; the people were eager to have their churches thrown open and to witness the usual shows and splendors, and they consented to the exile of their leader. The followers of a cardinal arrested him, but he was rescued by his friends, certain counts of the Campagna, who regarded him as a saint, and who now lodged him safely in one of their castles. The emperor Frederick Barbarossa, coming to Rome to assume the imperial crown, was met by embassies from both parties in the city. He warmly favored that of the pope, and not only received that of the people very coldly, but arrested one of the counts who had rescued Arnaldo, and forced him to name the castle in which the monk lay concealed. Arnaldo was then given into the hands of the cardinals, and these delivered him to the prefect of Rome, who caused him to be hanged, his body to be burned upon a spit, and his ashes to be scattered in the Tiber, that the people might not venerate his relics as those of a saint.

The scene of the first act of Niccolini's tragedy is near the Capitoline hill, in Rome, where two rival leaders are disputing in the midst of their adherents. When the people ask what cure there is for their troubles, Arnaldo answers :

Liberty and God.

A voice from the orient,

A voice from the occident,

A voice from thy deserts,

A voice of echoes from the open graves,

Accuses thee, thou shameless harlot! Drunk

Art thou with blood of saints, and thou hast lain

With all the kings of earth. Ah, you behold her!
She is clothed on with purple; gold and pearls
And gems are heaped upon her; and her vestments
Once white, the pleasure of her former spouse,
That's now in heaven, she has dragged in dust.
Lo, is she full of names and blasphemies,
And on her brow is written Mystery!

The people ask Arnaldo what he counsels them to do,
and he advises them to restore the senate and the
tribunes, appealing to the glorious memories of the
place where they stand, the Capitoline hill:

Where the earth calls at every step, "Oh, pause,
Thou treadest on a hero!"

They desire to make him a tribune, but he refuses,
promising, however, that he will not withhold his
counsel. While he speaks some cardinals, with nobles
of the papal party, appear and announce the election
of the new pope, Adrian. "What is his name?" the
people demand, and a cardinal answers, "Breakspear, a
Briton."

Arnaldo.—

I never care to ask

Where popes are born; and from long suffering,
You, Romans, before heaven, should have learnt
That priests can have no country. . . .
I know this man; his father was a thrall,
And he is fit to be a slave. He made
Friends with the Norman that enslaves his country;
A wandering beggar to Avignon's cloisters
He came in boyhood and was known to do
All abject services; there those false monks
He with astute humility cajoled;
He learned their arts, and 'mid intrigues and hates

He rose at last out of his native filth
A tyrant of the vile.

The cardinals, confounded by Arnaldo's presence and invectives, withdraw, but leave one of their party to work on the fears of the Romans and make them return to their allegiance by pictures of the desolating war which Barbarossa, now approaching Rome to support Adrian, has waged upon the rebellious Lombards at Rosate and elsewhere. Arnaldo replies:

Romans,
I will tell all the things that he has hid;
I know not how to cheat you. Yes, Rosate
A ruin is, from which the smoke ascends.
The bishop, lord of Monferrato, guided
The German arms against Chieri and Asti,
Now turned to dust; that shepherd pitiless
Did thus avenge his own offenses on
His flying flocks; himself with torches armed
The German hand; houses and churches saw
Destroyed, and gave his blessing on the flames.
This is the pardon that you may expect
From mitred tyrants. A heap of ashes now
Crowneth the hill where once Tortona stood;
And drunken with her wine and with her blood
Fallen there amid their spoil upon the dead,
Slept the wild beasts of Germany; like ghosts
Dim wandering through the darkness of the night.
Those that were left by famine and the sword,
Hidden within the heart of thy dim caverns,
Desolate city! rose and turned their steps
Noiselessly toward compassionate Milan.
There they have borne their swords and hopes: I see
A thousand heroes born from the example
Tortona gave. O city, if I could,
O sacred city! upon thy ruins fall

the type of ecclesiastical ambition, has in himself. The pope expresses his ardent desire to bring Arnaldo back to his allegiance, and when Guido reminds him that Arnaldo has been condemned by a council of the church and that it is hardly in his power to restore him, Adrian turns upon the cardinal:

What sayest thou?

I can do all. Dare the audacious members
Rebel against the head? Within these hands
Lie not the keys that once were given to Peter?
The heavens repeat as 'twere the word of God,
My word that here has power to loose or bind.
Arnaldo did not dare so much. The kingdom
Of earth alone he did deny me. Thou
Art more outside the church than he.

Guido humbly sues for pardon and then withdraws, at the pope's bidding, to send a message to Arnaldo, whereupon Adrian utters the following soliloquy:

At every step by which I've hither climbed
I've found a sorrow; but upon the summit
All sorrows are; and thorns more thickly spring
Around my chair than ever round a throne.
What weary toil to keep up from the dust
This mantle that's weighed down the strongest limbs!
These splendid gems that blaze in my tiara,
They are a fire that burns the aching brow
I left with many tears, O Lord, to thee!
Yet I must fear not; He that did know how
To bear the cross, so heavy with the sins
Of all the world, will succor the weak servant
That represents his power here on earth.
O silences of the cloister, O ye mists
Of mine own isle that make the light o' the sun
Obscure as one day was my lot, amidst

The furious tumults of this guilty Rome,
Here, under the superb effulgency
Of burning skies, I think of you and weep!

Arnaldo appears before the pope, who bids him kneel down and kiss his feet, and speak to him as to God. He will receive him only as a penitent, but Arnaldo says:

The feet

Of his disciples did that meek one kiss
Whom here thou representest. But I hear
Now from thy lips the voice of fiercest pride.
Repent, O Peter, that deniest him,
And near the tempter art, but far from God!

* * * * *

Why seek'st thou empire here, and great on earth
Art mean in heaven? Ah! vainly in thy prayer
Thou criest, "Let the heart be lifted up!"
'Tis ever bowed to earth.

* * * * *

Now, then, if thou wilt,

Put forth the power that thou dost vaunt; repress
The crimes of bishops, make the church ashamed
To be a stepmother to the poor and lowly.
In all the Lombard cities every priest
Has grown a despot, in shrewd perfidy.
Now siding with the church, now with the empire,
They have dainty food, magnificent apparel,
Lascivious joys.

In the same strain he proceeds for thirty or forty lines further, concluding:

Tell me, Adrian,

Must thou not bear a burden that were heavy
Even for angels? Wherefore wilt thou join
Death unto life, and make the word of God,

That says "My kingdom is not of this world,"
A lie? Oh, follow Christ's example here
In Rome; it pleased both God and her
To abase the proud and to uplift the weak.
I'll kiss the foot that treads on kings!

Adrian answers, haughtily:

Arnaldo,
I parley not, I rule; and I, become
On earth as God in heaven, am judge of all,
And none of me; I watch, and I dispense
Terrors and hopes, rewards and punishments,
To peoples and to kings; fountain and source
Of life am I, who make the church of God
One and all-powerful.

Finally the pope tells Arnaldo that if he will renounce his false doctrine and leave Rome he will, through him, give the Lombard cities a measure of liberty that shall not offend the church. But Arnaldo refuses and the interview comes to an end.

Then follows a scene in which Cardinal Guido, sent by the pope to disperse a popular assembly, is stoned to death by the people. He dies full of faith in the church and the righteousness of his cause, and his body is carried into the square before St. Peter's. A throng of people, including many women, has followed the bier, but the pope repels them from the church door and proclaims the interdict. Then follow some lyrical passages in which Adrian commands the pictures and images to be veiled and the relics to be concealed, and curses the enemies of the church. The following is a

rhymeless translation, but one that is far from reproducing the power of the original:

The Pope.—To-day let the perfidious
 Learn at thy name to tremble,
 Nor triumph o'er the ruinous
 Place of thy vanished altars.
 Oh, brief be their days and uncertain;
 In the desert their wandering footsteps,
 Every tremulous leaflet affright them!

The Cardinals.—Anathema, anathema, anathema!

Pope.—May their widows sit down 'mid the ashes
 On the hearths of their desolate houses,
 With their little ones wailing around them.

Card.—Anathema, anathema, anathema!

Pope.—May he, who was born to the fury
 Of heaven, afar from his country
 Be lost in his ultimate anguish.

Card.—Anathema, anathema, anathema!

Pope.—May he fly to the house of the alien oppressor
 That is filled with the spoil of his brothers, with women
 Destroyed by the pitiless hands that defiled them;
 There in accents unknown and derided, abase him
 At portals ne'er opened in mercy, imploring
 A morsel of bread.

Card.— Be that morsel denied him!

Pope.—I hear the wicked cry: I from the Lord
 Will fly away with swift and tireless feet;
 His anger follows me upon the sea;
 I'll seek the desert; who will give me wings?
 In cloudy horror, who shall lead my steps?
 The eye of God maketh the night as day.
 O brothers, fulfil, then,
 The terrible duty;
 Throw down from the altars
 The dim-burning tapers;
 And be all joy, and be the love of God
 In thankless hearts that know not Peter, quenched,

As is the little flame that falls and dies,
Here in these tapers trampled under foot.

In the third act Arnaldo appears in a desolate place in the Campagna, near the sea. He has been expelled from Rome by the people eager for the opening of their churches, and soliloquizes on his fate in language that subtly hints all his passing moods and paints the struggle of his soul:

Like this sand
Is life itself, and evermore each path
Is traced in suffering, and one footprint still
Obliterates another; and we are all
Vain shadows here that seem a little while,
And suffer, and pass. Let me not fight in vain,
O Son of God, with thine immortal word,
Yon tyrant of eternity and time,
Who doth usurp thy place on earth, whose feet
Are in the depths, whose head is in the clouds,
Who thunders all abroad, The world is mine!
Laws, virtues, liberty I have attempted
To give thee, Rome. Ah! only where death is
Abides thy glory. Here the laurel only
Flourishes on the ruins and the tombs.
I will repose upon this fallen column
My weary limbs. Ah, lower than this ye lie,
You Latin souls, and to your ancient height
Who shall uplift you? I am all weighted down
By the great trouble of the lofty hopes
Of Italy still deluded, and I find
Within my soul a drearer desert far
Than this, where the air already darkens round,
And the soft notes of distant convent bells
Announce the coming night. . . . I cannot hear them
Without a trembling wish that in my heart
Wakens a memory that becomes remorse. . . .
Ah, Reason, soon thou languishest in us,

Accustomed to such outrage all our lives.
Thou know'st the cloister; thou a youth didst enter
That sepulchre of the living where is war,—
Remember it and shudder! The damp wind
Stirs this gray hair. I'm near the sea. O night,
Thy silence is no more; sweet on the ear
Cometh the far-off murmur of the floods
In the vast desert; now no more the darkness
Imprisons wholly; now less gloomily
Lowers the sky that lately threatened storm.
Less thick the air is, and the trembling light
O' the stars among the breaking clouds appears.
Praise to the Lord! The eternal harmony
Of all his work I feel. Though these vague beams
Reveal to me here only fens and tombs,
My soul is not so heavily weighted down
By burdens that oppressed it. . . .
I rise to grander purposes: man's tents
Are here below, his city is in heaven.
I doubt no more; the terror of the cloister
No longer assails me.

When we are brought into the presence of Barbarossa we find him awaiting the arrival of Adrian, who is to accompany him to Rome and crown him emperor, in return for the aid that Barbarossa shall give in reducing the rebellious citizens and delivering Arnaldo into the power of the papacy. Heralds come to announce Adrian's approach, and, riding forth a little way, Frederick dismounts in order to go forward on foot and meet the pope, who advances, preceded by his clergy, and attended by a multitude of his partisans.

Since the time of Henry II it had been the custom of the emperors to lead the pope's horse by the bridle, and to hold his stirrup while he descended. Adrian waits in vain for this homage from Frederick, and then

alights, with the help of his ministers, and seats himself in his episcopal chair, while Frederick draws near, saying, aside:

I read there in his face his insolent pride
Veiled by humility.

He bows before Adrian and kisses his foot, and then offers him the kiss of peace, which Adrian refuses, and haughtily reminds him of the fate of Henry. Frederick answers furiously that the thought of this fate has always filled him with hatred of the papacy, and Adrian, perceiving that he has pressed too far in this direction, says to the emperor:

I am truth,
And thou art force, and if thou part'st from me,
Blind thou becomest, helpless I remain.
We are but one at last. . . .
Cæsar and Peter,
They are the heights of God; man from the earth
Contemplates them with awe, and never questions
Which thrusts its peak the higher into heaven.
Therefore be wise, and learn from the example
Of impious Arnaldo. He's the foe
Of thrones who wars upon the altar.

But he strives in vain to persuade Frederick to the despised act of homage, and it is only at the intercession of the emperor's kinsmen and the German princes that he consents to it. When it is done in the presence of all the army and the clerical retinue, Adrian mounts, and says to Frederick, with scarcely hidden irony:

In truth thou art
An apt and ready squire, and thou hast held

My stirrup firmly. Take, then, O my son,
The kiss of peace, for thou hast well fulfilled
All of thy duties.

But Frederick, crying aloud, and fixing the eyes of
the multitude upon him, answers:

Nay, not all, O Father!—
Princes and soldiers, hear! I have done homage
To Peter, not to him.

The church and the empire being now reconciled,
Frederick receives the ambassadors of the Roman re-
public with scorn; he outrages all their pretensions to
restore Rome to her old freedom and renown; insults
their prayer that he will make her his capital, and heaps
contempt upon the weakness and vileness of the people
they represent. Giordano replies for them:

When will you dream,
You Germans, in your thousand stolid dreams,—
The fume of drunkenness,—a future greater
Than our Rome's memories? Never be her banner
Usurped by you! In prison and in darkness
Was born your eagle, that did but descend
Upon the helpless prey of Roman dead,
But never dared to try the ways of heaven,
With its weak vision wounded by the sun.
Ye prate of Germany. The whole world conspired,
And even more in vain, to work us harm,
Before that day when, the world being conquered,
Rome slew herself.

The soldiers of Barbarossa press upon Giordano to
kill him, and Frederick saves the ambassadors with
difficulty and hurries them away.

In the first part of the fifth act, Niccolini deals again with the rôle which woman has played in the tragedy of Italian history, the hopes she has defeated and the plans she has marred through those religious instincts which should have blessed her country, but which, through their perversion by priestcraft, have been one of its greatest curses. Adrian is in the Vatican, after his triumphant return to Rome, when Adelasia, the wife of Ostasio, count of the Campagna, in whose castle Arnaldo is concealed, and who shares his excommunication, is ushered into the pope's presence. She is half mad with terror at the penalties under which her husband has fallen, in days when the excommunicated were shunned like lepers, and to shelter them, or to eat and drink with them, even to salute them, was to incur privation of the sacraments; when a bier was placed at their door and their houses were stoned; when King Robert, of France, who fell under the anathema, was abandoned by all his courtiers and servants, and the beggars refused the meat that was left from his table—and she comes into Adrian's presence accusing herself as the greatest of sinners. The pope asks:

Hast thou betrayed

Thy husband, or from some yet greater crime

Cometh the terror that oppresses thee?

Hast slain him?

Adelasia.— Haply I ought to slay him.

Adrian.— What?

Ade.—I fain would hate him and I cannot.

Adr.— What

Hath his fault been?

Ade.— Oh, the most horrible
Of all.

Adr.— And yet is he dear unto thee?

Ade.— I love him, yes, I love him, though he's changed
From that he was. Some gloomy cloud involves
That face one day so fair, and 'neath the feet,
Now grown deformed, the flowers wither away.
I know not if I sleep or if I wake,
If what I see be a vision or a dream.
But all is dreadful, and I cannot tell
The falsehood from the truth; for if I reason,
I fear to sin. I fly the happy bed
Where I became a mother, but return
In midnight's horror, where my husband lies
Wrapt in a sleep so deep it frightens me,
And question with my trembling hand his heart,
The fountain of his life, if it still beat.
Then a cold kiss I give him, then embrace him
With shuddering joy, and then I fly again,—
For I do fear his love,—and to the place
Where sleep my little ones I hurl myself,
And wake them with my moans, and drag them forth
Before an old miraculous shrine of her,
The Queen of Heaven, to whom I've consecrated,
With never-ceasing vigils, burning lamps.
There naked, stretched upon the hard earth, weep
My pretty babes, and each of them repeats
The name of Mary whom I call upon;
And I would swear that she looks down and weeps.
Then I cry out, "Have pity on my children!
Thou wast a mother, and the good obtain
Forgiveness for the guilty."

Adrian has little trouble to draw from the distracted woman the fact that her husband is a heretic—that heretic, indeed, in whose castle Arnaldo is concealed. On his promise that he will save her husband, she tells him the name of the castle. He summons Frederick,

who claims Ostasio as his vassal, and declares that he shall die, and his children shall be carried to Germany. Adrian, after coldly asking the Emperor to spare him, feigns himself helpless, and Adelasia too late awakens to a knowledge of his perfidy. She falls at his feet:

I clasp thy knees once more, and I do hope
Thou hast not cheated me! . . . Ah, now I see
Thy wicked arts! Because thou knewest well
My husband was a vassal of the empire,
That pardon which it was not thine to give
Thou didst pretend to promise me. O priest,
Is this thy pity? Sorrow gives me back
My wandering reason, and I waken on
The brink of an abyss; and from this wretch
The mask that did so hide his face drops down
And shows it in its naked hideousness
Unto the light of truth.

Frederick sends his soldiers to secure Arnaldo, but as to Ostasio and his children he relents somewhat, being touched by the anguish of Adelasia. Adrian rebukes his weakness, saying that he learned in the cloister to subdue these compassionate impulses. In the next scene, which is on the Capitoline hill, the Roman senate resolves to defend the city against the Germans to the last, and then we have Arnaldo a prisoner in a cell of the castle of St. Angelo. The prefect of Rome vainly entreats him to recant his heresy, and then leaves him with the announcement that he is to die before the following day. We leave Arnaldo in his prison, and it is supposed that he is put to death during the combat that follows between the Germans and Romans immediately after the coronation of Frederick.

Such is a brief outline of Niccolini's great tragedy, in which he poured forth all the bitterness of his hatred and scorn for the temporal power of the popes. If we consider the grandeur of its plan, and how it employs for its effect the evil and the perverted good of the time in which the scene was laid, how it accords perfect sincerity to all the great actors—to the pope as well as to Arnaldo, to the emperor as well as to the leaders of the people—we must admit that its conception is that of a very great artist. Nor is the execution less to be admired. We cannot judge it by the narrow rule which the tragedies of the stage must obey; rather must we look at it with the liberal imagination to which a great fiction appeals. Then the patience, the subtlety, the strength with which each character, individual and typical, is evolved; the picturesqueness with which every event is presented; the lyrical sweetness and beauty with which so many passages are enriched, will all be apparent, and we shall realize the æsthetic sublimity of the work as well as its moral force and its political significance.

Pietro Cossa.

In the recent drama one name stands forth pre-eminently—that of Pietro Cossa, among whose numerous historical tragedies the most remarkable are *Cleopatre*, *Messalina*, *Nero*, *Julian the Apostate*, *Cola di Rienzi* and the *Borgias*. Cossa is more of a playwright than a poet, though excelling in versification, rhetoric and masculine strength, the last a rare quality on the Italian stage. His scenes are always powerful; his

action never halts or lingers; there is never any doubt as to the author's intention, and the language is energetic without any trace of bombast. But in the higher regions of art his shortcomings are very apparent. He has little creative power, his only felicitous inventions being of minor characters, and he rarely ventures to travel beyond the beaten path in the delineation of historic personages. He has no penetration, no subtlety and little insight into character, which he usually takes at second hand. As conventional types, however, his characters are brilliantly drawn, if sometimes overelaborated with excessive details, as though he could not bear to part with them. If he has produced no great dramatic work, he has at least given us some very fine historical masquerades. In his single comedy, entitled *Plautus and His Age*, Cossa has drawn a lively picture of Roman society. Other compositions worthy of note are the tragedies of Cavallotti, the New Testament trilogy of Giuseppe Bovio and the comedies of Roberto Bracco and Giacinto Gallina.

D'Annunzio.

Among living dramatists Gabriele d'Annunzio occupies a high place and is one of the few Italian authors whose works have found a foothold in other European countries. In the United States his plays, and especially his *Francesca da Rimini*, are well known; but they are not popular, for they are not adapted to American audiences, which desire to be amused, care little for tragedy, do not want to be instructed, and, above

all, will not be bored. A local critic says of *Giocanda* as performed in Philadelphia in 1902 with Duse as the heroine: "It is not an attractive play; it is not a dramatically effective play, so far as the purposes of the drama are concerned, being sombre almost through its entire length of the four acts, and varying only from the representation of annoyance to that of horror." A play which begins with a suicide, progressing through pain and distress to an irretrievably disastrous close, unrelieved by a single touch of humor or pleasantry, can never be made attractive to an American audience. Unmitigated human suffering, undeserved and uncompensating, may be endured by the play-going public of Europe, but it will never be acceptable on this side of the Atlantic. Even less satisfactory was *La Citta Morta*, or *The Dead City*, presented the following night, with its hideous story of the incestuous love of brother and sister. In his dramas D'Annunzio would seem to have sounded all the depths of human depravity, so that he has no further message to send us, or, if he has, let us hope that he will spare us the infliction.

VIII.

The Italian Stage and Actors.

The lyric stage in Italy takes precedence of the dramatic, and in the large cities the production of a new opera is considered a national event, forming for many days previous to its production the chief topic of conversation. No such enthusiasm is manifested in regard to the first representation of a new play; and, although the house may be crowded and the author called before the curtain, he may deem himself fortunate if his drama is played three or four times during the season, whereas a popular opera will be given night after night for several weeks. An opera, if it has exceptional merit, may be the means of carrying the fame of its composer to the farthest limits of the earth, but it is a question whether a comedy which pleases at Venice will be appreciated even at Rome or Naples, such are the diversities in manners and customs between one Italian province and another.

Supremacy of Opera.

Opera is everywhere fostered and protected. There are a dozen musical conservatori, public and private, in

each of the principal cities, for the training of singers, and prizes are accorded to them out of funds especially set apart for the purpose by the government, which also grants large annual subsidies to the leading lyric theatres, such as the Scala at Milan, the San Carlo at Naples, the Fenice at Venice, the Pergola at Florence, the Carlo Felice at Genoa, the Comunale at Bologna and the Apollo at Rome. The dramatic stage has none of these aids; the various companies have to pay their own expenses, and, whatever may be the merits of the artists who compose them, they rarely obtain any special recognition from the government. Although the smallest Italian city possesses its theatre, and some of the capitals—Milan and Naples, for instance—at least a dozen, there is no training school for the stage in any part of the country. In each city the largest and most magnificent theatre is reserved exclusively for operatic performances. When, therefore, the Italian opera houses close for the season, they are never reopened for the accommodation of the wandering stars. The drama is banished to the inferior theatres, and while thousands of francs are spent on the scenery of a new opera or ballet, the player has to content himself with an indifferent stage and wretched decorations.

As Salvini remarked, during his visit to the United States, "Theatrical affairs are just the opposite in Italy to what they are in America. In Italy the opera-bill is never changed more than three times in as many months; in America it varies almost every evening. In Italy the play-bill is renewed nightly, while in this country and in England a drama, if good, may have a

run of over a hundred representations." Nothing surprised Salvini more than the splendor of the *mise en scène* of some of the New York plays, but he accounted for it easily enough. The managers of most of the New York, Paris and London theatres do not hesitate to lavish large sums of money upon their decorations and scenery, because, should the piece fail for which they were painted, they can be used in some other. The Italian theatres are nearly always the property either of some nobleman or of a company of speculators, whose principal object is to make as much money out of them and spend as little upon them as possible. They are rented out for a few weeks to one or another of the many troupes of actors which are constantly wandering about the country, and which bring their own scenery and dresses with them, generally of the cheapest and most tawdry description.

Open-Air Theatres.

Almost every Italian family of any social position possesses a box at one of the principal theatres, where visits are received and many a scene from the *School for Scandal* is enacted. In winter the opera is the standard amusement of the fashionable world, while the favorite resort in summer is the *diurno* or open-air theatre, which is in the form of an amphitheatre, the stage, with its accessories, facing an unroofed inclosure, with the seats arranged in tiers one above another and fenced off by an iron balustrade from a terrace which serves the purpose of a gallery. A spacious covered corridor

is nearly always to be found adjacent to the diurno, beneath which the audience can take refuge in case of a shower, walk between the acts and indulge in cooling drinks. The abbonamento, or subscription, to a diurno costs from three to ten dollars for the season of thirty or forty representations. When a dramatic company is about to visit a city the manager first secures his abbonati; for according to their number he is able to regulate his expenses, as he counts little on chance spectators, and nearly always plays before the same audience.

The Actor's Profession.

A Tuscan proverb says: "Figlio d' attore, attore," the son of an actor is always an actor; and this in Italy is especially true. The three greatest actors of modern times, Salvini, Rossi and Majeroni, belong to families which have long been popular on the stage, and so do the actresses Ristori and Sedowsky. Ristori made her début as an infant in the cradle, and was for many years a member of a troupe the leading lady of which was her mother. There are still living in Italy some of the members of a Venetian troupe of comedians whose ancestors were the first interpreters of the comedies of Goldoni, and several of them claim descent from players who enacted the tragedies and comedies of classical literature before the courts of Lucrezia Borgia and Leonora d'Este. In glancing over an Italian play-bill one is invariably struck by the fact that many of the artists bear the same name and are evidently connected by ties of consanguinity or marriage. In the Ristori

troupe, for instance, there were several actors calling themselves by the name of that great artist, and who were doubtless of her family. The Salvini company embraces, besides the two brothers Tommaso and Alessandro, several Piamontis, two or three Piccininis and two Colonellos.

A glance at the history of the stage in Italy will enlighten us as to the true cause both of the harsh condemnation of the church and of the prejudice of society against the dramatic profession. The plays of the old Romans were proverbially loose both in their plots and dialogues, and Juvenal and others have spoken of the actors of their time with the bitterest contempt. During the middle ages the members of the various religious fraternities almost monopolized the stage with their sacred dramas and mysteries, and the "profane stage," as it was called, was so degraded that more than once both the church and state had to use their influence to suppress performances which were too immoral to be described. With the Renaissance the drama was reinstated in the position it occupied during the days of Roman civilization, but the plays of this period were merely imitations of the Latin comedies; and if we may judge by the most celebrated of those which still exist—the *Mandragora* of Macchiavelli—far exceed their models in license. When Benedict XIV ascended the pontifical throne he established a severe censorship, with the effect of banishing immoral productions from the stage without improving its intellectual tone. In the eighteenth century Goldoni appeared and gave to the world his graceful comedies, which were followed

by the lyric dramas of Metastasio and the lofty tragedies of Alfieri. Since then there has been a succession of able dramatists—Monti, Gozzi, Manzoni and others; and as the class of performances acted was elevated, so the character of the performers was improved. From being dissolute they became generally respectable; and at present it may be safely asserted that a better-conducted, more frugal or industrious class of men and women can hardly be found than the Italian players. The class of actresses with whom their profession is only a means of displaying their beauty and splendid but often ill-gotten robes and jewelry is little known in Italy. Such persons would not be tolerated either by their comrades or by the public. Indeed, although within the past few years, owing to the unsettled state of affairs, a great many plays of questionable morality have been acted, especially in Rome, still the tone of the performances usually witnessed in an Italian theatre is greatly above the average of what even Americans applaud.

Theatrical Troupes.

Italian actors have always been in the habit of forming themselves into troupes, or, as they call them, *compagnie*, placed under the direction of one who is both manager and principal performer. These troupes are divided according to the various kinds of acting; thus, there are companies of tragic, melodramatic and comic actors, but it is very rare to find a combination of tragedy and comedy in the same entertainment. There are probably more than a hundred different troupes of

actors in Italy, including those devoted to the marionette and dialect performances. The Ristori, Salvini and Rossi troupes made the round of the world, while the Bellotti-Bon has never quitted Italy. The last was a remarkable combination of well-trained actors, devoted exclusively to the representation of modern society plays and dramas, mostly translated or adapted from the French. Bellotti-Bon, the director, was not excelled in his own line, even on the stage of the Théâtre Français. His company was rich, and its scenery and dresses tasteful. The late Signora Cazzola, once the leading lady of the troupe, was perhaps the best high-comedy and dramatic actress Italy has produced. Alexandre Dumas the younger preferred this lady's interpretation of the rôle of Marguerite Gauthier in *La Dame aux Camélias* to that of Madame Doche, who created the part. She produced a great effect when the dying Camille looks at herself in the glass for the first time after her long illness. Instead of screaming or fainting, as is usual with most actresses who undertake the character, Cazzola stood for a long time gazing intently at the havoc disease had wrought upon her lovely countenance. Then, with a deep sigh and an expression of intense agony, she turned the mirror with its back toward her, implying that she could never again endure the pain of seeing herself reflected upon its truth-telling surface. On the toilette-table was a vase full of camélias—those beautiful but scentless flowers which were emblematic of her brilliant but artificial life. Taking one of these in her hand, she plucked it to pieces leaf by leaf, and when the last petal fell to the ground, went

quietly back to her bed, there hopelessly to await the coming of death. Her parting with Armand was very pathetic, and her death, although harrowing and true to nature, was not revolting, its horrors being moderated by artistic good sense and delicacy. This great artiste died young, worn out by the strong emotions she not only represented, but actually felt.

Prominent Players.

Cazzola, together with Virginia Marini and Isolina Piamonti, was a pupil of Salvini. Virginia Marini is well considered in Italy, and used to be the leading lady in the Salvini troupe. She later directed a company of her own and was succeeded in her former position by the estimable Signora Piamonti, whom Salvini declared to be one of the most versatile artistes he had ever known, equally good in the highest tragedy or the liveliest farce. Her *Dalila* in *Samson* was much admired in America, but her rendering of the rôle of *Francesca da Rimini* was perhaps her greatest performance.

Signora Sedowsky was probably the greatest of Italian tragic actresses. While perhaps less stately and majestic than Ristori, in fire and depth of feeling she greatly surpassed that eminent tragédienne, her *Phèdre* being pronounced by excellent judges equal to that of Rachel. Sedowsky was born at Naples and was the proprietress of three large theatres in that city. She was the wife of a wealthy nobleman, but notwithstanding her rank and wealth she remained on the stage, and

at the same time was received with honor in the first society. She never acted outside of Italy, and very rarely beyond the walls of Naples.

Adelaide Ristori.

The superlative merits of Ristori are so well known in America that the mere mention of her name recalls some of the finest personations ever witnessed on the stage. Her genius and beauty, her majesty and glorious method of declamation won her a foremost rank in her profession, and her virtues and nobility of conduct the esteem of all who knew her. There are, indeed, few women more estimable, either in private or professional life, than was Adelaide Ristori, Marchioness Capranica del Grillo. It may be a matter of surprise, but such is the fact, that in Italy Ristori was more famous in comedy than in tragedy, excelling in such parts as the hostess in Goldoni's clever comedy of *La Locandiera*. Yet it is hard to believe that she produced anything superior to her magnificent tragic conceptions as *Medea* and *Lady Macbeth*. Of the latter she played only the sleep-walking scene during her American tours, and that in English, with just enough of her pleasing Italian accent to give further interest to her marvelous personation. The effect was electric; for though her audiences were often scanty, and even cold, it was a revelation such as only the highest order of genius can produce. Her version differed essentially from those of Mrs. Siddons, Charlotte Cushman and other great personators of the part. Especially fine

were the facial expression and the rubbing of the right hand over the left in the lines beginning "Out, out, damned spot," ending with a long-drawn sigh, as of a lost spirit, which chilled the hearts of the most hardened veterans, for whom both the real and the mimic world had long since lost their attractions.

Eleanora Duse.

Less favorable was the reception of Eleanora Duse, who made professional tours of the United States in 1895 and 1902. On the latter occasion she made a fatal mistake, for her arrival was heralded by the announcement that she purposed to introduce D'Annunzio's productions and to cultivate a taste for his work, to the enlightenment and edification of the American people. First of all, American audiences go to the theatre to be amused, and not to be enlightened and edified, especially through the medium of D'Annunzio's plays. Said a Philadelphia paper, commenting on her performance of *Giaconda*: "If such a purpose is seriously contemplated, it may as well be said now that it is predestined to failure. *Giaconda* and lugubrious dramas of this morbid and distressing character cannot be made acceptable in America, as they are entirely foreign to the monitions of our temperament."

Yet the critic and the audience rendered full justice to the great actress, for great she unquestionably is, and if she would renounce her avowed intention of acting only in D'Annunzio's plays, and appear, say, in Shakespearean parts, people would not merely acknowl-

edge her genius, but would go to see her. As it is, there was on the night in question but half a house—due partly to inclement weather—and that was far from enthusiastic, while the opera, of which it was the opening performance, was crowded with the wealth and fashion of the city. Continuing, the critic remarks: “Mme. Duse was but one among a group of players, each of whom demonstrated the possession of dramatic qualities most effectively developed. In but two scenes does her presence dominate the situation. In the first act she has very little to do or say, the evolution of the interests in the play depending on Lorenzo Gaddi, the sculptor’s master, and the venerable friend of the family, a noble character rendered with distinction by Ettore Mazzanti. The second act gives an environment to the masterly monologue which constitutes the main feature of the entire drama. In the closing scene of this act Silvia Settala has a declamatory passage in which Duse strikes fire for the first time. Her spirited enunciation of her purpose to visit her husband’s studio and face her rival there is a magnificent display of reserved force, in which this artist reaches the height of her art.

“In the studio scene between the downtrodden wife and the superb Giaconda, who has the advantage of feeling triumphantly at home in that place where Silvia has been a stranger, the siren enchantress is given by the author decidedly the best of the argument. Giaconda, magnificently personated by Emilia Varini, is supposed to triumph over the desolated victim of the drama, and Silvia is cast down into a depth of calamity

by which she is so terribly mutilated in attempting to save from destruction her husband's chief work of sculpture that it would have been better for her had the falling statue killed her on the spot. Degradation, humiliation and the crushing weight of hopeless misery can be piled upon sorrow's head until the sacrifice becomes too poignant to retain human interest, and a reaction occurs, in which only a sense of the helplessness of humanity remains to be experienced.

"The performance was carried out at a racing speed and the play was evidently pruned down for quick representation, many of the intended effects being left to the imagination of the auditors rather than rendered by the actors. To compress a four-act tragedy into a performance of a brief two hours necessitates rushing haste, though the American part of the audience had evidently enough of the play, even in its abbreviated form."

Other Italian Actors.

Of Italian actors, Gustavo Modena was one of the most renowned. He was to the stage of his native land what Garrick was to that of England, and his conception of the various parts in classic drama, his "points," and even his dress, have become traditional and are almost invariably retained by his followers. One of his most famous rôles was Saul, in Alfieri's tragedy of that name. In person he was tall and largely built; his countenance was not prepossessing, and, like Michael Angelo, he had a broken nose. His eye could assume a terrific aspect, and his voice was rich, power-

ful and varied in tone. At times it rolled like thunder, while at other moments it was soft and tender as the sweetest notes of a flute.

Rossi was in some respects preferred to Modena, and even to his pupil, the great Salvini. He was, perhaps, more impetuous and ardent than either; but he was less intellectual, and his elocution was decidedly inferior.

Majeroni was an actor of the same school, but in his later years had a tendency to rant.

Salvini.

Tommaso Salvini was born in the Lombard capital on January 1, 1830, of Milanese parentage, his father being an actor of note and his mother a popular actress, whose maiden name was Guglielmina Zocchi. When quite a boy Tommaso showed a rare talent for acting, and performed in certain plays given during the Easter holidays in the school where he was educated with such rare ability that his father determined to train him for the stage, placing him under the tuition of Modena, who treated him almost as a son. The culture received thus early from such able hands soon bore fruit, and before he was thirteen the lad won repute in juvenile characters. At fifteen he lost both his parents, and the bereavement so preyed upon his spirits that he was obliged to suspend his career for two years, placing himself again under the tuition of Modena. When he again emerged from retirement he joined the Ristori troupe and shared with that great actress many a triumph. In 1849 Salvini entered the army of Italian

independence and fought valiantly for the defence of his country, receiving, in recognition of his services, several medals of honor. Peace being proclaimed, he appeared upon the stage in a company directed by Cesare Dondini, playing in the *Edipo* of Niccolini—a tragedy written expressly for him—and achieving a great success.

Salvini's next performance was in Alfieri's *Saul*, and then all Italy declared that Modena's mantle had fallen on worthy shoulders. His fame was now prodigious, and wherever he went he was received with boundless enthusiasm. He visited Paris, where he played Orasmane, Orestes, Saul and Othello. On his return to Florence he was hospitably entertained by the marquis of Normanby, then English ambassador to the court of Tuscany, who strongly encouraged him to extend his repertory of Shakespearean characters. In 1865 occurred the sixth centenary of Dante's birthday, and the four greatest Italian actors were invited to perform in Silvio Pellico's tragedy of *Francesca da Rimini*, which is founded on an episode in the *Divina Commedia*. The cast originally stood on the play-bills thus: Francesca, Signora Ristori; Lancelotto, Rossi; Paulo, Salvini, and Guido, Majeroni. It happened, however, that Rossi, who was unaccustomed to play the part of Lancelotto, felt timid at appearing in a character so little suited to him. Hearing this, Salvini, with his usual politeness and good-nature, volunteered to take this minor part, relinquishing the grand rôle of Paulo to his junior in the profession. He created by the force of his genius such a vivid impression that the city of Florence re-

warded him with a statuette of Dante, and King Victor Emmanuel with the title of knight of the order of Saints Maurice and Lazarus. Later he received from the same monarch a diamond ring, with the rank of officer in the order of the Crown of Italy. During a visit to Madrid, his acting of the death of Conrad in *La Morte Civile* produced such an impression that the easily-excited spectators rushed upon the stage to ascertain whether the death was actual or mimic. Queen Isabella II conferred upon him many marks of favor, as afterward did King Louis of Portugal, who frequently entertained him at the royal palace in Lisbon.

Very remarkable is the difference between the Salvini of the stage and the Salvini of private life, the one so fiery and impetuous, the other so gentle and urbane. He possessed all the manners of the good old school, courtly and a little ceremonious, reminding one of those Italian nobles of the sixteenth century. His greeting was cordial and his conversation delightful, full of anecdote and marked with enthusiasm for his art. "When I first became acquainted with him," said one of his admirers, "I was of the opinion that his interpretation of Hamlet was based only upon the translated text, but in the course of a very long conversation on the subject I discovered that he was well acquainted, through literal translations, not only with the text, but also with the notes and comments of our leading critics." In common with nearly all the great actors of his age, he was a thorough and life-long student, devoting more study to a single part than others bestowed on their entire repertoire. Such is indeed the chief char-

acteristic of the great masters of the stage, by whom hard, faithful work is recognized as the essence of genius.

Salvini's American Tour.

Salvini's visit to the United States formed a memorable episode in theatrical circles. His acting was even more of a revelation than Ristori's, especially his Shakespearean characters, and above all, his Hamlet and Othello, which he presented as they had never before been witnessed on the English-speaking stage. In Hamlet he made many changes, and Othello he cut into six acts, in order to dispense with part of the scene-shifting, the noise of which disturbed his equanimity. "It is a matter of wonder to me," he said, "that English and American actors can play a great character like this for so many nights in succession, and above all that they can retain their self-possession while the fidgety noise of scene-shifting is going on behind them." It cost Salvini several years of study to make himself master of the part, and he played it with such enthusiasm and intensity that, after repeating it three nights in succession, he was utterly exhausted. His interpretation was absolutely unrivalled, and differed in many respects from the conventional type. "In my opinion," he said, "Shakespeare intended Othello to be a Moor of Barbary or some other part of northern Africa, of whom there were many in Italy during the sixteenth century. I have met several, and I think I know how to imitate their ways and manners. The historical Othello was not a black man at all. He was a white man, and a

Venetian general named Mora, whose history resembles that of Shakespeare's hero in many particulars. Giraldo Cinthio, probably for the sake of effect, made out of the name Mora, moro, a blackamoor; and Shakespeare, unacquainted with the true story, followed the old novelist's lead. It is well that he did so; for we have in consequence the most perfect delineation of the peculiarities of Moorish temperament ever conceived." The costumes worn by Salvini in *Othello* were copied from Venetian paintings of the fifteenth century, in which several Moorish officers appear.

Salvini was a most conscientious actor, always doing his best, without regard to the size or quality of his audiences. On one occasion, after a poorly attended performance of *Saul*, he was found by a friend in his dressing-room in a state of complete exhaustion. "How can you exert yourself thus," he was asked, "to please so few people?" "They have paid their money," was the reply, "and are entitled to the best I can do for them; besides that, when I am on the stage I forget the world and all that is in it, and live the character I represent." "You will make a grand Lear," said another. "Yes," he answered, "I think I can make something out of the old king. I have been reading the tragedy for some time, but it will take me two years to study it thoroughly."

Salvini's visit to America was fruitful of a double good. He showed us the splendor of Italian genius, even revealing new marvels in that mine of wealth, the works of the greatest bard of the English-speaking race; and he went back to Italy to tell her people of things

he had seen in the New World which his great compatriot had discovered—as wonderful in their way as any related by Othello to Desdemona's willing ear. His reception here was of the kind always accorded in the United States to actors and actresses of genius, and not even Henry Irving was received with more hearty welcome. He met with neither rivalry nor jealousy; for there were none of his school, and all our great actors, including Edwin Booth, then in the zenith of his fame, extended to him the right hand of fellowship as cordially as did the audiences which represented the culture and wealth of every great city in the Union.

THE FAITHFUL FRIEND
(IL FIDO AMICO)
OF
FLAMMINIA SCALA.

From the Commedia dell' Arte.

(Translated, after Klein, by W. H. H. Chambers.)

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

PANTALON, a Venetian.

ISABELLA, his Daughter.

PEDROLINO, a Servant.

HARLEQUIN, a Servant.

GRATIANO, a Doctor of Laws.

FLAMMINIA, his Daughter.

FLAVIO, his Son.

ORATIO, a Young Nobleman.

CAPTAIN SPAVENTO.

A MUSICIAN.

CAPTAIN OF THE WATCH.

CORPORAL OF THE WATCH.

FRANCESCHINA.

The Faithful Friend.

ARGUMENT.

There live in Naples two noble youths, one named Oratio, the other Flavio. Both love a charming maiden, Isabella, the daughter of a celebrated Pantaloon belonging to the "Needy Ones of Venice," a well-known comedy troupe. Isabella returning Oratio's love, he decides to abduct her, with the help of his friend Flavio, whose secret love for her is unsuspected. After the abduction, Oratio takes Isabella to Flavio's house, leaving her with his sister, Flamminia. Burning with secret passion for Oratio, the latter leaves with him. Flavio, however, who now has Isabella in his power, guards her honor sacredly, in order to return her to his friend as pure as he left her. Finally, Oratio marries Flamminia, renouncing his first love for the sake of Flavio, to the satisfaction of both maidens and with the blessing of their parents. There is no dialogue in the piece; for, as already mentioned, this was extemporized by the actors, the scenes being written merely in skeleton form, hung up behind the stage, and consulted by each of the actors before making his appearance.

ACT I.

SCENE—THE CITY OF NAPLES. NIGHT.

Pantaloon comes on the stage with a lighted lantern and says he has told the regent and the captain of the watch of the flight of his daughter. He adds that he strongly suspects the Pedant (Doctor Gratiano) because he is nowhere to be seen.

Harlequin conjectures that Isabella has eloped with Oratio. They hear people coming, so both go in the house, *Harlequin* appearing immediately after at a window. Meanwhile, on comes

Oratio, in order to learn, if possible, what *Pantaloon* knows of the disappearance of his daughter. He tells the servant, *Pedrolino*, that he abducted Isabella and took her to the house of Flavio, his most intimate friend.

Pedrolino advises *Oratio* that it is not wise to trust Flavio to this extent, taking into consideration the fire of youth. He talks, also, of the love Flavio's sister, *Flamminia*, feels for *Oratio*.

Ora. cuts this conversation short, tells *Pedrolino* to leave and makes a signal for Isabella to come out.

Isabella comes shyly out of the house and tells him that his friend, Flavio, for some reason has not returned. Meanwhile

Flamminia appears at a window.

Isa. asks *Oratio* if he has ever loved another and begs him to take her away from this house as soon as he can.

Ora. replies boldly that he never loved anyone else, and promises to take her away shortly. Then he sends her back, with the remark that this house contains what is dearest and loveliest to him on earth. He sees *Pantaloon* coming and runs off.

Pant. learns of *Harlequin*, who had slipped out and listened to what *Oratio* said. He sees the doctor coming on with a lighted lantern.

Gratiano intends to go into the house for his supper.

Pant. invites himself.

Grat. says he has nothing for him, stops, acts as if he had lost one of his legal papers and goes off seeking it.

Pant. is strengthened in his suspicion of the doctor.

Harl. volunteers to get into the house by means of a ladder, as he has done often, to meet the servant-girl, Olivetta, whom he loves. They go off to get the ladder.

Flam. at the window wonders why her brother and father have not yet returned home. She speaks of her burning love for Oratio.

Isa., under the window, has been listening to Flamminia's soliloquy and calls her down. They talk on the street.

Flam. tells Isabella that Oratio has deceived her, that he has brought her there really for Flavio and that Oratio loves her, Flamminia.

Isa. cries bitterly over Oratio's treachery, begs Flamminia to receive her and to watch over her honor. Goes crying into the house.

Flam. apostrophizes Cupid, praying the god to cause Oratio and Isabella to become estranged and to turn his heart to her; then goes into the house.

Captain Spavento comes on with musicians to serenade Isabella, who has been promised him in marriage by her father. Meanwhile

Grat. returns for his supper.

Cap. Spa. invites himself to this meal, but

Grat. insists that the captain should fast, and goes into the house.

Cap. Spa. and his musicians play awhile. Then out steps

Harl. and asks the captain for whom the serenade is intended.

Cap. for Isabella, my promised bride.

Harl. imparts to him Isabella's flight.

Cap. storms around and swears, so that

Harl. flees into the house. The noise brings

Ped. on; he acts as if he had a bow under his mantle and intended to shoot the captain.

Cap. and his musicians run off in great disorder.

Ped. laughs scornfully, but hides himself, as

Pant. comes on with a lighted lantern to discover what all the noise is about. Now appears

Harl. with a ladder. As soon as he reaches Pantaloon he blows out the light in the lantern, places the ladder against Gratiano's house and ascends. During this

Ped. sneaks in, changes his voice and beats Pantaloon.

Harl. from fright falls from the ladder, picks himself up and runs away.

Ped. goes off laughing.

ACT II.

SAME SCENE—NIGHT.

Flavio comes on explaining to *Pedrolino* that he dare not go home because he loves *Isabella* so dearly, and fears that he cannot restrain himself. He wishes to be careful not to do anything to injure his friend.

Pedrolino tries to show him the folly of his love for her.

Flav. goes off sighing.

Oratio comes on.

Ped. tells him that he believes it necessary, without mentioning his reasons, that *Isabella* should be taken away from the house. For the sake of safety he advises *Oratio* to dress in the Spanish style, as Spaniards are so universally feared.

Ora. leaves, promising to follow his advice.

Captain Spavento comes on, and there follows a comic scene in the dark between *Harlequin* and *Pantaloon*, both "drunken with sleep."

Flav. seizes the captain away with a bare weapon. The noise brings

Isabella out of the house. She recognizes *Flavio* and inquires why he did not come home for supper,

Flav. excuses herself on the ground of his love for a lady.

Isa. asks the lady's name.

Flav. replies that he dare not name her.

Ped. calls aloud: "Isabella." While he is calling, on comes

Cap. Spa., wrapped in a Spanish mantle. In the dark

Ped. takes the captain for Oratio disguised as a Spaniard and advises Isabella to go with him.

Cap. Spa. puts his arms around her and leads her away.

Flamminia hears and sees all from her window, and, believing it to be Flavio that led Isabella away, mourns over her destroyed hopes.

Flav., who is listening, pities his sister and himself.

Ped., in great excitement, comes on and tells them of the abduction of Isabella by the captain.

Flav. hurries away to rescue her.

Flam., pleased with the substitution, goes quickly to Isabella's room, where she puts on Isabella's hat and mantle, which she had left behind.

Ora., in Spanish disguise, comes on and is leading Flamminia—whom he believes to be Isabella—away, when the captain of the watch arrives and arrests him.

Captain of the Watch, also believing Flamminia to be Isabella, says that he will take her to his wife and daughters, where she must remain awhile; then leads her away, after telling Oratio that he must appear the next morning before the regent to answer for his misdeeds.

Flav. returns and tells the greatly-dejected Oratio that he has succeeded in rescuing Isabella from the captain and has taken her to the lodging-house of Franceschina.

Ora. becomes very joyful.

Pantaloön comes out, and then

Doctor Gratiano. They engage in a violent quarrel, as Pantaloön still believes that his daughter was abducted with the full knowledge and consent of the doctor.

ACT III.

SAME SCENE—DAYBREAK.

Franceschina tells *Oratio* of the self-sacrifice of *Flavio*; how he is really consumed with love for *Isabella*, but fights it down out of friendship. She tells that *Isabella* has returned.

Pantaloon goes to the captain of the watch, and is shown the imprisoned lady, whom he finds to be *Flamminia*.

Flavio, learning this, expresses astonishment at *Oratio*'s treachery, and swears that he will kill *Flamminia*.

Isabella on her way home meets *Flavio*, who relates the foregoing circumstances to her. She laments over *Oratio*'s betrayal of friendship and love.

The watch come along; they wish to arrest *Flavio*, who defends himself with his sword, fighting them off valiantly. As they escape

Flav. falls to the ground, wounded in the head, and is helped to *Pantaloon*'s house.

Isa. binds up his wounds, crying the while.

Captain Spavento comes on with his head tied up, pretending to be sorely wounded.

Pant. insists on seeing the injuries, and, finding none,

Harl. drives the captain away, beating him with a club.

Flamminia, accompanied by her father, comes on and explains everything in full.

Pant. finds the wounded *Flavio* and *Isabella* at his house and forgives her.

Oratio now returns.

Pant., softened by the return of his daughter and her established innocence, consents to her marriage with *Oratio*, amid the tears and expressed sympathy of those present.

Ora., however, deeply moved by *Flavio*'s true friendship, asks *Flamminia*'s hand for himself and begs *Flavio* to marry the girl he loves—*Isabella*. All consent, amid general rejoicing and blessings.

THE DREAM OF SCIPIO.

BY PIETRO METASTASIO.

(Translated by John Hoole.)

PERSONAGES.

SCIPIO.

CONSTANCY.

FORTUNE.

PUBLIUS.

EMILIUS, Father of Scipio.

CHORUS OF HEROES.

**THE ACTION IS IN THE PALACE OF
MASINISSA IN AFRICA.**

The Dream of Scipio.

PRELUDE.

Scipio Africanus, lying asleep, is visited by Constancy and Fortune, who urge him to arouse himself to action. He imagines himself to be in the palace of Masinissa,

Where but even now I closed my eyes in sleep.

But Constancy says to him:

No, Africa is far,
Far distant from us. Scipio, thou art placed
In Heaven's unmeasured temple.

Here he would remain with his ancestor, Publius and his father, Emilius, but as Fortune and Constancy tell him, "It is not yet allowed, it cannot be;" and says Publius, "Thou yet must live and long." When Scipio answers that he has "lived enough, enough for Scipio," Emilius replies:

Yes; but not enough
For Fate's designs, or for the weal of Rome,
For earth and Heaven.

Publius responds in similar strain, and is seconded by Constancy, but Fortune, whom Scipio scorns, threatens dire disasters. While defying her, he awakes amid a violent storm, and finds himself in the palace of Masinissa, where "Constancy still dwells with Scipio," and in his breast he "feels her sacred influence."

Scipio (asleep), Constancy, Fortune.

Fortune.—Come, mighty offspring of Emilius, come,
Pursue my steps.

Constancy.—O! Scipio! come and follow
My better track.

Scipio.—Who dares disturb my rest?

Fort.—'Tis I.

Cons.—'Tis I: appease thy ill-tim'd anger.

Fort.—Turn, turn to me.

Cons.—Behold my features.

Scip.—Gods!

What blaze of light! What harmony unknown!
What forms are these so splendid and so fair!
Where am I?—Who are you?

Cons.—The nurse of heroes.

Fort.—The great dispenser I of every good
The universe can yield.

Cons.—I am Constancy.

Fort.—And Fortune I.

Scip.—But wherefore seek ye me?

Cons.—That thou, O! Scipio, may'st between us choose
Thy partner through the rugged paths of life.

Fort.—We promise both to make thee blest.

Cons.—Decide:

To her or me intrust thy future guidance.

Scip.—I know not what to answer.

Fort.—Dost thou doubt?

Cons.—Canst thou one moment pause?

Fort.—My lock invites thee;

And wilt thou not to me consign thy days?

Cons.—Hear'st thou my name and com'st not?

Fort.—Speak.

Cons.—Resolve.

Scip.—What shall I answer? If I must resolve,

One moment give to commune with myself.

Where am I? Say, what power has hither brought me?

If all I see be truth, or but a dream,

If yet I wake, or fancy but deceive me?

While round this wondrous scene I gaze,

My soul, bewilder'd with amaze,

On nothing yet resolves.

The heart in mingled passions lost,

As by a troubled ocean tost,

A thousand thoughts revolves.

Cons.—Well hast thou said. converse with each apart,

And learn whate'er thou seekest.

Fort.—Scipio, yes: .

But brief be thy demands: I cannot bear

A long delay; for, varying still, I shift

With every moment my pursuit and place.

Unstable as the wind am I,

With looks that change and feet that fly:

With anger now I burn, and now

The smiles of pleasure smooth my brow.

Sometimes I take delight awhile,

To raise from earth the ruin'd pile;

And soon an equal zeal employ

My recent labor to destroy.

Scip.—Where am I, then? In Masinissa's palace,

Where but even now I clos'd my eyes in sleep?

It cannot be.

Cons.—No, Africa is far,

Far distant from us. Scipio, thou art plac'd
In Heaven's unmeasur'd temple.

Fort.—Dost thou not

Confess it by the numerous stars that blaze
With glories round thee? By the unwonted sound
Of whirling spheres in rapturous minstrelsy?
By this celestial orb of living sapphire
In which they roll?

Scip.—O! say, amidst the spheres

What makes this symphony?

Cons.—The same that makes

With them proportion'd inequality
Of measure and of motion: in their course
They circling meet, and each returns a sound
Distinct from each, while all together form
One perfect concord. On the mortal lyre
The strings, attemper'd thus by hand and ear,
Emit sweet harmony. This magic force,
This secret rule that makes unlike agree,
Is call'd proportion, universal law
Of all created things; mysterious ray
Of highest wisdom, which the Samian sage
In sacred numbers taught.

Scip.—But wherefore fails

Such powerful melody to strike the sense
Of human organs? Why unheard by those
In our terrestrial dwelling?

Cons.—Strains like these

Confound the faculties of earthly sense.

Those eyes that seek the noon-day sun,

Soon lose their dazzled sight:

The nerves oppress'd and weaken'd, shun

Th' excessive blaze of light.

The simple hind, who near resides

Where falling Nilus roars,

Hears not the rush of foaming tides

That shake the deafen'd shores.

Scip.—Say, what inhabitants——

Fort.—No further question,
But make at length thy choice.

Scip.—Indulgent yet
Say, who reside in these supernal seats?

Cons.—Numbers are here, of various virtues, fram'd
To various parts.

Scip.—But who their dwelling find
Where now we meet?

Fort.—Behold who come to instruct thee.

Scipio, Constancy, Fortune, Publius, Chorus of Heroes and
Emilius.

Chorus.—From heroes sprung, by fate bestow'd
To give to Rome her earliest fame,
O! welcome to this bright abode:
No strangers we to Scipio's name.

A thousand glorious footsteps view:
Lo! here thy great forefathers trace,
And through each shining path pursue
The deeds of thy illustrious race.

Scipio.—Ye powers! am I deceiv'd, or do these eyes
Behold my great progenitor, who bow'd
Rebellious Afric to the yoke of Rome?

Publius.—Doubt not; 'tis I.

Scip.—My soul is chill'd with awe!
Are then the dead——

Pub.—Scipio, thou err'st, for know
That Publius is not dead.

Scip.—Yet sure consum'd
To nameless ashes, midst the funeral pile,
Long since has Rome bewail'd thee.

Pub.—Cease, O! cease;
Thou little know'st thyself. Believ'st thou, then,
That hand, those features and those limbs, that form
The outward man are Scipio? Thou'rt deceiv'd—

They are but vestments—learn, the immortal sense,
 By which alone we think, conceive and live;
 That has no parts, and cannot be dissolv'd.
 That lessens not its power by length of years,
 That, that is Scipio, and can never die.
 Hard were, indeed, the destiny of virtue,
 If nothing of us liv'd beyond the tomb;
 And if, indeed, we knew no other good
 Than what on earth the wicked chiefly share.
 No, Scipio, no—the perfect cause of all
 Is ever just. Beyond the funeral pile
 We still have other hopes. These glorious seats
 Of light eternal are our great reward;
 And fairest of them this, where dwells with me
 Whoe'er on earth has lov'd his native land;
 Whoe'er for public good has clos'd his days,
 And for another's sake his blood effus'd.

If here thy hopes some future day
 Would find a happy seat,
 Thy great forefathers' deeds survey,
 Nor Publius' name forget.

By him, who meets like us his death,
 Here endless life is known:
 He merits not his natal breath,
 Who lives but for himself alone.

Scip.—As heroes they reside—

Fortune.—If still thy doubts

Are unresolved, my patience, Scipio, fails—
 Decide—decide.

Constancy.—Let him demand at full:

Since what he learns will teach him best to fix
 Between our claims.

Scip.—As heroes then reside

In these blest regions, wherefore sees not Scipio
 His warlike father?

Pub.—Dost thou not behold him

There full reveal'd to sight?

Scip.—'Tis true, 'tis true,

Forgive me, mighty father! I have err'd,
But 'twas the error of my dazzled eyes,
I saw thee not: I err'd not in my mind;
There ever dwells thy image—thou art he,
Already in thy well-known form I trace
Paternal majesty. I gaze upon thee,
And my heart beats with love and filial duty.
Indulgent gods! O! father most belov'd,
O! happy day!—but dost thou calmly thus
Receive thy son? Serene, thy features show
No fond emotion. Feel'st thou not, my father,
To see me here, a joy that equals mine?

Emilius.—The joy, my son, which heavenly bosoms feel,
Oppresses not like yours, and yet is more.

Scip.—I am rapt beyond myself—all, all is wonder!
My every sense is lost!

Emil.—Thou canst not quit
The false ideas of the world below,
Though now so far remote. Cast down thine eye,
Look there, behold enclos'd with murky clouds,
Yon little globe, yon scarce-distinguish'd spot.

Scip.—Ye powers!—can that be earth?

Emil.—Thy earth is there.

Scip.—All its huge forests, all its rapid floods;
Its mighty provinces, contending realms,
With every countless nation—Tiber—Rome?

Emil.—All in that spot compris'd.

Scip.—O! sire belov'd!

How vain, how nothing to my sight appears
The wretched theatre of human pride!

Emil.—Ah! could'st thou on that theatre, my son,
Observe the actors; see their follies, dreams,
Their false pursuits; and every cause that here
Claims just derision, there exciting rage,
And grief and joy and love—how wretched, then,
To thee would seem the boasts of human-kind.

You hapless mortals, smile below
 To mark the puling infant's woe;
 And mock the little tears that flow
 For every trivial ill.
 No less above we smile to view
 Man's ripen'd age such toys pursue,
 And even with locks of silver hue,
 Be helpless children still.

Scip.—O! Publius! O! my father! let me here
 With you reside. I gladly will forsake
 That seat of human wretchedness below.

Fort.—It is not yet allow'd.

Cons.—It cannot be.

Pub.—Thou yet must live and long.

Scip.—I've liv'd enough,
 Enough for Scipio.

Emil.—Yes; but not enough
 For Fate's designs, or for the we' of Rome,
 For earth and Heaven.

Pub.—Much hast thou done already,
 But more remains to do. 'Tis not in vain
 That Scipio boasts the honors of his race,
 His lineal wreaths; and not by chance the plains
 Of fair Iberia own'd thy youthful toils.
 Think not thou bear'st in vain the glorious name
 Fatal to Africa. The task was mine
 To lay the yoke on such a potent foe,
 But thine is to destroy him.—Go—meantime
 Prepare no less for sufferings than for triumph:
 Both furnish palms for Virtue. Destiny
 May shake, but not subdue her: when she strives
 With adverse days she shines with nobler fame.

High-seated on the mountain's brow
 An aged oak, when tempests blow,
 Secure the blustering rage sustains:
 His leaves in winter scatter'd round,
 With firmer root he strikes the ground,
 And losing beauty strength he gains.

Scip.—Since all were vain to oppose the will of Fate,
I yield to her decree.

Cons.—Now, Scipio, time
Demands thy choice.

Fort.—Thou need'st no further learn,
But well canst judge between us.

Scip.—'Tis requir'd,
O! Publius, that of these contending powers——

Pub.—I know it all—act as thou wilt.

Scip.—My father,
O! give me counsel.

Emil.—No; my counsel, son,
From thee would take the glory of thy choice.

Fort.—If thou would'st wish for happiness, beware
Thou dalliest not with Fortune—Scipio, seize
The moment when my lock invites thy hand.

Scip.—But tell me, thou that urgest thus thy claim,
Why should I follow thee, and why prefer
Thy steps before thy rival's?

Fort.—What attempt,
Without my aid, can e'er with man succeed?
Know'st thou my power? I am arbitress below
Of every good or ill: behold the hand
That scatters, at my pleasure, grief or joy,
Disgrace or honors, poverty or wealth.
Lo! I am she that builds, destroys, renews
The mightiest empires. I, at will, can change
A cottage to a throne; and, at my nod,
A throne becomes a cottage. In the sky
Whirlwinds are mine, and tempests on the sea.
I rule the fate of armies: at my smile
Defeat becomes a gain, and palms arise
From battles lost; and when displeas'd, I rend
The promis'd laurel from the victor's hand,
Even on the edge of conquest. Would'st thou more?
Virtue and valor both confess my sway.
When Fortune wills the vilest seems most bold,
And bold the vilest. In despite of justice,
Guilt stands absolv'd, and innocence is guilty.

To him I view with favoring sight,
Like day appears the gloomy night:
For him, when winter binds the plain,
Earth gives to spring the golden grain.

But when on one, in evil hour,
The angry eyes of Fortune lour;
To him the wood its shade denies;
No waves for him the sea supplies.

Scip.—And is there nothing, then, on earth to oppose
To such tremendous power?

Cons.—Yes—Constancy.

Know, Scipio, I, and I alone, prescribe
The law and limits to her dreaded reign.
Where'er I am she never can extend
Her mutable dominion. In my presence
Her best of gifts will never boast a charm,
Nor shall her threats have terror. Virtue, valor,
Perchance from her may suffer wrong; but Time,
My great avenger, will at length assign
To every deed its merit.—Not in her,
In me, O! Scipio, the preserver view
Of states and empires: this thy ancestors,
And this thy Rome experienc'd. Press'd, indeed,
By Brennus, in Tarpeia's rocky straits,
The Latian freedom shook, but could not fall.
'Tis true, that on the banks of Aufidus
The Roman consul saw his warrior-youth
All perish by the sword; but scorn'd himself
To sink in blank despair. To gain the palms,
The latest palms from Rome, with all his host
Of countless standards, Annibal o'ershades
The Roman soil, but finds that soil a grave
To all the victor's hopes. Such deeds are mine,
And such as Fortune never can resist.
She, wearied soon, a different aspect wears;
And in her own despite becomes my slave.

The rock, with foamy billows white,
Seems sinking down the tumbling tide,

While soaring o'er its topmost height,
The waters gain on every side.

But proudly batter'd round in vain
Its stately head the tempest braves,
Till smooth'd to calms, the placid main
Creeps round its foot with lambent waves.

Scip.—No more—celestial Constancy, 'tis thine:
Lead where thou wilt, I ask no other guide;
I follow thee.

Fort.—Are, then, my gifts despis'd?

Scip.—I seek not, nor refuse them.

Fort.—And my rage?

Scip.—I not defy, nor fear it.

Fort.—Scipio, think;

Thou may'st in vain repent—look well upon me—
Reflect, and then resolve.

Scip.—I am resolv'd.

Go, boast an undisputed sway,
That all mankind thy rule obey;
Yet think not hence in chains to bind
A noble heart, a virtuous mind,
That neither fear nor baseness knows.
Let abject souls thy influence own,
And bend before thy tyrant-throne;
Such souls as godlike gifts despise,
And only sordid merit prize,
Such merit as thy smile bestows.

Fort.—Is there a mortal, then, that dares deny
To me his vows, and slight my proffer'd grace?

Scip.—Yes—I am he.

Fort.—'Tis well—prepare to prove

My hostile fury—come, disasters dire,
Adventures horrible! Ye ministers
Of my resentment—crush this daring rebel,
To you consign'd, and doom'd to every woe.

Scip.—Ye powers! what can this mean! what sanguine gleam!
What clouds and storms! What darkness gathers round!
And hark! resounding through the affrighted spheres
What horrid crash! A hundred forked bolts
Hiss o'er my head, while yon ethereal vault
Seems tumbling into chaos!—But the soul
Of Scipio knows not fear—in vain your threats,
Insulting Fortune! Goddess still unjust,
Perfidious power!
But hold, what voice awakes
My slumbering sense? Where am I? This is sure
The abode of Masinissa—where is Publius?
My father, where? The heavens and starry spheres
All vanish'd, and these wonders but a dream!
Yet this at least is real—Constancy
Still dwells with Scipio—in my breast I feel
Her sacred influence—friendly gods! I own
Your favoring grace—auspicious omen, hail!

THE POST-INN
(L' OSTERIA DELLA POSTA)

OF

CARLO GOLDONI.

(Translated by W. H. H. Chambers.)

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COUNT ROBERT *di* RIPALUNGA.

COUNTESS BEATRICE, *his* Daughter.

MARQUIS LEONARD *de'* FIORELLINI.

LIEUTENANT MALPRESTI, *friend of the Marquis.*

BARON TALISMANI.

A SERVANT *OF THE INN.*

COUNT ROBERT'S VALET.

The Post-Inn.

ARGUMENT.

After a custom that obtains in Italy, a father, without consulting his daughter's taste, has promised her in marriage to the Marquis Leonard de' Fiorellini. In fact, they have never seen the man to whom she is engaged, nor has he—the Marquis—seen either of them. While on his way to be married, Fiorellini stops at the Post-Inn, where he learns, to his utter surprise, that a lady to whom he is talking is his betrothed—travelling in an opposite direction. To discover the motive of her journey he feigns to be a certain captain, which leads to some diverting, but to the Marquis embarrassing, situations. To further complicate matters, an ardent wooer, the Baron Talismani, arrives in angry mood. A reconciliation is effected with the father, speedily followed by a quarrel, and steel is drawn. The Marquis is accused of being an impostor, but unmask; everything is satisfactorily explained, and the happiness begins, as usual, at the end of the comedy.

SCENE.—The waiting-room in the Post-Inn at Vercelli, Italy.

Enter the Marquis and the Lieutenant.

Lieutenant.—Hallo! landlord — hallo there! — where the devil's everybody?

Servant.—(Coming in.) I'm here, how can I serve you, sir?

Lieu.—We want a room.

Serv.—Here's one, sir.

Lieu.—What room is it? Let's see it. (Leaves room.)

Serv.—(To Marquis.) Will you remain with us awhile, or do you leave immediately?

Marquis.—We want simply a little snack, some soup or cold meat, and meanwhile get the horses ready.

Lieu.—(In the doorway.) You have no better room than this?

Serv.—No, sir; it's the best that we can offer.

Lieu.—But I've been here before, I know you've a better one facing the street. Come, open it up, we wish to see it.

Serv.—It's occupied, sir.

Lieu.—Occupied, by whom?

Serv.—By a gentleman from Milan, with a lady, said to be his daughter.

Lieu.—Is she beautiful?

Serv.—Oh! not so bad.

Lieu.—You say they come from Milan; where are they going?

Serv.—I cannot tell you, sir.

Lieu.—But why do they remain at Vercelli?

Serv.—They arrived by the post. They are resting and have ordered dinner. After the mid-day heat is over they will continue their journey.

Lieu.—That's good. We'll dine with them, if they'll permit.

Marq.—No, no, my friend, let's push on; just a little lunch and away.

Lieu.—Now, my dear Marquis, to please you I left Turin, with ready eagerness to bear you company; but to ride on in this dust and heat I must really protest.

Marq.—And you, a military man, afraid of sun and dust!

Lieu.—If duty called I should go willingly, but nature

teaches me to avoid the disagreeable. I share your desire to see your bride-to-be, but spare your friend.

Marq.—Ho! ho! I understand. Fear of sun and heat! say rather a chance to dine with a petticoat.

Lieu.—Oh! the deuce! A few hours sooner or later, what's the difference. (Turning to the servant.) Prepare us a spread.

Serv.—You shall be served, sir.

Lieu.—See if these travellers will dine with us.

Serv.—The father has thrown himself on the bed and is asleep. I'll wait till dinner's ready, sir, before I ask.

Marq.—Well, hurry it along.

Serv.—Yes, sir, at once. (He turns to leave.)

Lieu.—Have you any good wine?

Serv.—If you wish Monferrato, we have some most excellent.

Lieu.—All right, let's try the Monferrato.

Serv.—You shall be served, sir. (Leaves.)

Lieu.—Be merry, Marquis, be merry; on the brink of matrimony you ought to be more joyful.

Marq.—True enough, but the thought that I have not as yet seen my betrothed disquiets me. I am told she is rather beautiful, well formed and amiable. I'm extremely curious to see her.

Lieu.—But how is it you find yourself obliged to marry a girl you've never seen?

Marq.—Count Robert, her father, is a nobleman of the old school, very wealthy. She is his only child. He has many relatives in Turin, among them his sister, a lady of the court who has property in Piedmont. My friends thought to do me good service by negotiating this marriage, and I, consulting my interest, consented.

Lieu.—And should she fail to please?

Marq.—I have pledged my word; I've no choice but to marry.

Lieu.—Bravo! matrimony's merely a contract; if love enters, that's over and above the bargain.

Marq.—I would that it entered!

Lieu.—Yes, solely for your welfare; however, I hope your love will not prove intense. I know your character; jealousy commingles with love. If you love her ardently, you will be constantly ill at ease.

Marq.—Truly, I know not whether it be better to have a charming wife and jealousy, or one ill-visaged and repose of mind.

Lieu.—I know what is better than either.

Marq.—And what is that?

Lieu.—Not to marry at all. Should your wife be attractive, she will charm not you alone; if homely, she will be pleasing neither to others nor to yourself. Homely, you will have a devil at home; beautiful, you will have devils both within and without your house.

Marq.—In short, you wish all to live after the manner of military men.

Lieu.—Yes, and I believe there is no better mode of life. To-day here, to-morrow there; to-day one little love affair, to-morrow another; to love, to court, to make happy, and then in a drum-tap to welcome the coming, and speed the parting ones.

Marq.—And barely arrived at the new garrison, in love again with the first girl that turns up.

Lieu.—Yes, and in the twinkling of an eye; and if the young lady now stopping here is just a wee bit coquettish, I'll show you a girl smitten with two words.

Marq.—Perhaps they won't desire our company.

Lieu.—I'll speak to the father; I'll introduce myself without ceremony, and we'll be fast friends immediately, as becomes military men.

Marq.—Nevertheless, we must hurry on.

Lieu.—Why, what's the hurry? You are not expected at Milan within a month. We'll dine, start at eight and to-morrow you can agreeably surprise your betrothed. In the meanwhile, if you wish to snatch a little rest, there is our room; I'll go into the kitchen and give an eye to the dinner. Happen

what may—if we must dine alone, with a bottle of good wine the day will not be ill-spent. (He leaves.)

Marq.—(Alone.) Bravo! my dear lieutenant; always good-humored. With what pleasure I, too, would embrace his profession. But the sole survivor of my family I must needs marry. May heaven grant me a wife amiable enough to lighten the matrimonial chain; for alas! though of gold adorned with jewels and embellished with flowers, it is none the less a chain. Liberty transcends all riches, but destiny wills that I submit to the laws of nature and contribute even at personal loss to the world's increase. (He enters his room.)

Enter the Countess; then the servant.

Countess.—Ho! Cecchino (louder) Cecchino! that fellow's always missing when I want him. It seems that I must go out if I wish— (Calling.) Is no one here?

Servant.—Yours to command, Miss.

Countess.—Where's our valet?

Serv.—Stretched out on yonder bench, fast asleep; cannons wouldn't awaken him.

Countess.—Bring me a glass of water.

Serv.—At once, Miss. Does the Signor Count still sleep?

Countess.—Yes.

Serv.—Would you object to two gentlemen dining with you?

Countess.—When my father awakens you may ask him.

Serv.—Very well, Miss. (He goes out.)

Countess.—At any other time I should greatly enjoy agreeable companionship, but now I'm in such low spirits that I haven't the heart to see any one.

Enter the Marquis.

Marquis.—Beg pardon, Miss, are you travelling, too?

Countess.—Yes.

Marq.—May I ask where you are going?

Countess.—To Turin.

Marq.—And I am on my way to Milan, with my companion.

Countess.—Then you are going to my native land. (About to leave.) With your permission——

Marq.—Pardon, but I would like to ask a question if you would be so kind——

Countess.—Excuse me, I fear to awaken my father.

Marq.—May I ask his name?

Countess.—Count Robert di Ripalunga.

Marq.—(Aside.) Great heavens! what do I hear! It must be my betrothed. But why travelling? Why has she left Milan?

Countess.—You seem surprised. Are you acquainted with my father?

Marq.—Well, I know him by reputation. Are you, perchance, the Countess Beatrice?

Countess.—Precisely. But, how did you learn of me?

Marq.—Are you not engaged to the Marquis Leonard de' Fiorellini?

Countess.—What! you know that as well?

Marq.—Certainly, the Marquis is an intimate friend. (Aside.) I must conceal my identity until I learn the object of her trip.

Countess.—Sir—pardon my asking—who are you?

Marq.—Count Aruspici, a captain of the king's guards.

Countess.—And you are a friend of the Marquis Leonard de' Fiorellini?

Marq.—We are quite intimate.

Countess.—May I flatter myself touching a favor I wish to obtain of you?

Marq.—You have but to order, Miss. Only too happy to obey. (Servant enters with a glass of water, which he hands to the Countess.)

Countess.—(To Marquis.) You will permit?——

Marq.—I sincerely trust you will not discommode yourself. (He hands her a chair, she sits and drinks.) (Aside.) Her face pleases, and her manners charm me. My heart says unmask, but curiosity restrains me. (The servant leaves.)

Countess.—As the gentleman and man of honor I believe

you to be, I ask you to tell me, with perfect sincerity, the character of the man to whom I am to be given in marriage.

Marq.—Yes, Miss, I pledge myself to give you a full and true portraiture. I know him as I know myself, and I promise exactness. Permit me, however, to first ask why you are here instead of awaiting at Milan the Marquis Leonard, who goes there to claim his bride.

Countess.—I should tell you frankly, only I fear to awaken my father, and if he found me here alone with a stranger——

Marq.—You are conversing with an intimate friend of the man to whom you are plighted. That's surely justification enough.

Countess.—You are right, the excuse is good.

Marq.—Please then——

Countess.—Willingly. My nature is too sincere to conceal the truth. My father has promised me to an unknown gentleman, and I who have never seen him know not that we can be happy together. I would not be deterred by his lack of beauty or charming manners. The most elegant, the most brilliant young man in the world might have, in my eyes, something repellant, something that would place me under the necessity of making my aversion known to him. That which interests me more than his figure is his character. Who will guarantee me that he is good, virtuous and warm-hearted? Neither riches nor nobility will make me happy without peace of mind, and this treasure I wish to defend at all hazard by retaining the liberty Heaven has granted me. My father, despite my protestations, despite my refusals, has contracted an engagement which may sacrifice me. At Milan I have relatives that are persuaded by my reasons and who share my chagrin. My father, however, to prevent all help or escape, is taking me to Turin, where he will place me in the hands of his sister, who made this marriage, and whether the husband be pleasing or not, he is determined that I shall accept him. I was not able to resist his brusque resolution to leave. I accompany him to Turin, but resolved, firmly resolved, to make known my aversion if my betrothed is displeasing. I will throw myself at the feet of the king, demanding protection from the violence of my father, quite ready to imprison myself forever

in a convent rather than give my hand to a man who may endanger all my future happiness.

Marq.—Miss, I cannot condemn your principles, nor your fears, nor your resolutions. I pity and approve; and if I were he to whom you are destined I should leave you in full liberty, were I so unfortunate as to displease you.

Countess.—Sir, I have said all regarding myself, with frank sincerity that I may say; now tell me something of the character of your friend.

Marq.—I shall begin with his person. While not at all handsome, still, in our country he is called passably good looking.

Countess.—Very well, quite sufficient for a husband.

Marq.—You know his age?

Countess.—Yes, that is almost the only thing I have been told regarding him. I know that he still enjoys the virility of his young manhood and has been so kindly treated by nature that he appears to be younger than he really is.

Marq.—In height he is rather above the average, and is neither fat nor thin.

Countess.—To that I'm quite indifferent, but tell me something of his character, his inclinations, his habits.

Marq.—You must know that the Marquis Leonard is so much my friend that I lack the heart to speak ill of him and the courage to praise.

Countess.—I have been told that he is sometimes ill-tempered.

Marq.—Yes, but never without reason.

Countess.—Is he jealous?

Marq.—To speak the truth, I'm afraid he is—just a little.

Countess.—If you know he is jealous, then you must know he has been in love.

Marq.—Ah! Where would you find a young man in ripe virility that has had no amours?

Countess.—That displeases me seriously.

Marq.—Don't let it disturb you. He always loved with deference, honor and fidelity.

Countess.—What! he always loved! he has been in love, then, a number of times.

Marq.—(Aside.) The devil! this talk is taking a deucedly embarrassing turn. (Aloud.) I can assure you that once married, his wife will possess his entire heart.

Countess.—You can assure me?

Marq.—Most certainly. Why, I know the Marquis through and through, and am so accurately acquainted with his inmost thoughts that I could swear to them.

Countess.—What are his favorite diversions?

Marq.—Without hesitation: books, discourse and the theatre.

Countess.—That's bad, very bad. A studious husband neglects his wife easily; a husband that loves discourse is seldom pleased at home; while one that frequents the theatre finds too easily commodious opportunities to conceive new passions.

Marq.—Pardon me, Miss, but as it strikes me you err, I feel obliged to vindicate my friend's taste. Learning is an occupation of the mind not in the least interfering with the heart's affection. Love is a passion of nature which makes itself felt even in the midst of the most serious, the most delightful studies. Who knows nothing but love must feel at times lassitude and satiety, and, far worse, must bore the object of his passion. On the contrary, study gives proportion, teaches us to love with greater delicacy and to discern the better our loved one's merit. The flames of love burn more brilliantly after giving the heart repose and the mind amusement. As to conversation: unhappy the man that loves not the society of his fellow-men! It makes us cultured and polite and divests us of those savage traits that liken us to beasts. A misanthrope, a recluse can be only troublesome at home and fatiguing to his wife. Is a man that abhors conversation likely to permit it to his wife? And, however loving a couple may be at the start, if together alone day and night, are they not sure to find frequent occasions to quarrel? Thus may their tenderness easily become ennui, disgust, antipathy. Now, touching theatres, I wish particularly to assure you that as I think, so thinks the Marquis, as if we were one being and

he were speaking through my lips. The theatre is the best pastime; most useful and necessary. Clever comedies at once instruct and amuse, while tragedies teach us carefully to regulate our passions. Nor is it to the theatre persons of bad intentions turn; there the eyes of the public compel decency and good manners. In short, Signora, if you desire an honest husband, loving and well conducted, I recommend the Marquis. But if you wish an effeminate fellow, dismiss him from your thoughts at once, for you may rest assured that, reading your thought, he would be the first to liberate you.

Countess.—I confess your words reassure me, and I shall go to Turin more willingly.

Marq.—Does the character of the Marquis attract you? Are you pleased with my frank portrayal?

Countess.—Quite content; that is, I am pleased to learn that he will set me free.

Marq.—Miss, pray pardon my boldness, I fear another has won your heart.

Countess.—Not at all; if I loved I should acknowledge it openly.

Marq.—But your beauty, has it touched no heart?

Countess.—I do not say that no one loves me; I say, simply, that my heart is free.

Marq.—And who, may I ask, sighs after you?

Countess.—Ah! you are a little too curious, captain.

Marq.—You have been so frank with me that I trust you will not conceal this secret.

Countess.—It's no secret at all. Why, it's known to my father, and, I may say, to every one. To be candid, my suitor is Baron Talismani.

Marq.—I do not know him. Is he young?

Countess.—Fairly so.

Marq.—And handsome?

Countess.—Oh! sufficiently.

Marq.—And you do not love him?

Countess.—I neither love nor hate.

Marq.—Yet you would accept him as husband?

Countess.—In preference to one I do not know.

Marq.—Excuse me, I fear you are enamored with him.

Countess.—You know me badly, sir. I am not given to falsehood.

Marq.—Your prejudice against the Marquis seems to indicate that you are already in love.

Countess.—Pardon me, I'm not prejudiced against him. I doubt, I tremble and I wish to be assured of his character. Can you blame me?

Marq.—No, adorable Countess. You merit happiness. (Tenderly.) I envy the fate of the happy man who takes you to wife. He will possess in you virtue and rare beauty. Gentleness and vivacity make brilliant your charming eyes—

Countess.—(Arising.) Clearly, captain, you are advancing rather too rapidly.

Marq.—I am animated by the interest I feel in my friend.

Countess.—Well, you'd better moderate that interest.

Marq.—(Aside.) Just Heaven! I wish to ask—yet dare not.

Countess.—(About to leave.) With your permission—it's time to awaken my father.'

Marq.—Pray, just one word.

Countess.—Well, what is it?

Marq.—Please speak with your accustomed sincerity. If I were he to whom you are destined in marriage would I find favor in your eyes?

Countess.—Since you are so fond of frankness, permit me to answer no.

Marq.—So you find me repellent?

Countess.—I will not say whether you please or displease me. I shall say, simply, that your last words show rather too much military license. I desire a modest, refined husband, not a savage. (She leaves.)

Marq.—(Alone.) Heavens! into what a dilemma I've brought myself. The character of the Countess is most charming, since founded on pure sincerity. But alas! I'm at the point of being refused, after seeing her, after reading in her heart, to lose her now would be painful. Then, too, she posi-

tively told me that if I were the chosen husband she would not be content. It is true she gave as motive my innocent transport; but perhaps this is a pretext only, to conceal a decided antipathy. What ought I to do? make myself known or return to Turin without seeing her again? Ah! would that I knew what to do! But here is my friend, I'll ask counsel of him, though I cannot safely rely on his prudence.

Enter the Lieutenant.

Lieutenant.—My dear fellow, we're going to fare sumptuously. We've both fat and lean, and I find the wine of Monferrato excellent. We've another guest, to boot. A gentleman friend of mine who has just arrived by the post. He's speaking, I know not of what, to the landlord now, and will join us immediately.

Marq.—What's his name?

Lieu.—Baron Talismani.

Marq.—What! Baron Talismani!

Lieu.—Why, do you know him?

Marq.—I've never seen him, but I know who he is.

Lieu.—I assure you, he's a gentleman.

Marq.—I don't doubt it. But have you told him you are with me? have you named me to him?

Lieu.—I haven't had time.

Marq.—So much the better. Please be careful not to do it.

Lieu.—What imbroglio is this? Any enmity between you two?

Marq.—Let us go into our room. I've a curious adventure to tell you.

Lieu.—Have you learned as yet if we shall have the pleasure of enjoying the society of the travelling lady?

Marq.—Come, I've something particular to tell you on this very subject.

Lieu.—Have you seen her?

Marq.—Come, let us retire; should the Baron come in, I fear an unpleasant scene. His presence here conceals some mystery. Come at once and listen, for now's the time if you

are truly my friend, to lend aid. (Aside.) Alas, I fear they love. I suspect the Countess affected a false sincerity. I burn with anger and tremble with jealousy. (He enters his room.)

Lieu.—(Alone.) What the deuce does this mean, anyway? I can't imagine. I'm sorry to see my friend so agitated, but I certainly will not lose an opportunity of diverting myself with a pleasant girl at a well-filled table. (He follows the Marquis.)

Enter Baron Talismani and the Inn-servant.

Servant.—Here, my lord, we've no other room unoccupied, unless a garret-chamber will answer.

Baron.—Where's the Lieutenant?

Serv.—Pardon me, I don't know the gentlemen apart, sir.

Baron.—It's he that spoke with me in the court-yard.

Serv.—I presume he's in that room with his travelling companion.

Baron.—And who is his travelling companion?

Serv.—I do not know, sir.

Baron.—And where is the room that the landlord told me is occupied by an old gentleman and his daughter?

Serv.—(Pointing.) It's there, sir.

Baron.—Very well, that's all I wish of you.

Serv.—I can give you a small room in the garret, sir.

Baron.—Never mind. Where do we dine?

Serv.—In this room, sir.

Baron.—Very well, I'll remain here. I've no need of another room.

Serv.—As you wish, sir. (He leaves.)

Baron.—(Alone.) Happen what may, I shall demand at least this much satisfaction; I must learn from whom this insult comes, the Count or his daughter. To leave without a single word! To permit me to go as usual to pay my addresses to the Countess and to be told by a lackey: They have left. The evening before we spent pleasantly together and yet they did not say: We leave to-morrow morning. It's insupportable disrespect, an insult.

Enter the Count (without his sword).

Count.—(On the threshold of his room.) (Aside.) What do I see! Baron Talismani here!

Baron.—(Aside.) I know not which agitates me the more, love or anger.

Count.—(Icily.) Signor Baron, permit me to salute you.

Baron.—(In the same tone.) So I salute you, Signor Count.

Count.—But why are you here, sir?

Baron.—To do my duty, sir. I have come to wish you a bon voyage and to fulfill with respect to you a civility you did not deign to show me.

Count.—You might have spared yourself the trouble. I know quite well, it is not on my account—

Baron.—Pardon me, sir, but it is on your account I have come.

Count.—And in what way can I serve you?

Baron.—I desire you to tell me what reasons induced you to leave Milan without doing me the honor of informing me of your proposed departure.

Count.—As there is no special tie between us, I did not feel under any obligations to inform you.

Baron.—But it seems to me you ought to have felt obliged by good manners, friendship, the customary politeness of good society.

Count.—In regard to good manners, I do not think I need to learn of you. You speak of friendship; learn that I am accustomed to practise it according to circumstances. As to politeness, if it were not that the respect I have for your family constrains me to silence—

Baron.—But your silence, sir, is far more disagreeable than anything you can say.

Count.—I will speak, then, to be less disagreeable. Kindly tell me if you know that my daughter is engaged to marry a gentleman from Piedmont?

Baron.—I know it very well, but I also know that she will not consent to marry a man unknown to her.

Count.—But think you that a daughter is her own mistress

and can keep her word when her father has signed the marriage contract.

Baron.—I think the authority of a father ought not to sacrifice his daughter.

Count.—But how do you know she'll be sacrificed?

Baron.—Can you assure me that she will be content?

Count.—To learn this I am taking her to Turin.

Baron.—That's all right; but why did you not announce your departure to your friends?

Count.—All my friends were advised.

Baron.—Then I haven't the honor of being regarded as a friend?

Count.—Baron, let us speak openly. The friendship you claim to feel for me is based on no sincere attachment to my person, but on love for my daughter—the only child of a father, not poor. But whatever motive may animate your desire to obtain her hand, I must regard it as unworthy of a gentleman who ought to respect the authority of a father. Perchance my daughter's resistance to the marriage I propose is due not so much to the innocence of her heart as to the pride excited by the clever flatteries of her attendant lover. Beatrice is sensible and well-mannered; hence I have reason to suspect that her disobedience is due to some secret passion. On you alone as its author can my suspicions fall. I feared if I confided in you my intention to conduct my daughter to Turin that you would induce in her so great an opposition that I should be compelled to use force. This is the reason I concealed my departure from you. I certainly had no intention of hurting your feelings, and if I have done so, pray pardon me. Put yourself in the place of a gentleman who has pledged his word and excuse an old father.

Baron.—Freely, Count, your excellent reasons justify you and your courteous explanations please me. I shall confess the truth, I esteem highly your charming daughter—or, to be more truthful, I love her tenderly. Would to Heaven I were worthy to possess her! I love her not for any selfish interest in her dowry, but for the virtue and beauty with which she is adorned. I swear on my word of honor that I have had no

part in the opposition she has shown your wishes. I am incapable of attempting to incite in her such opposition, nor is she weak enough to yield. If I have given cause for displeasure, pray pardon me; excuse an honorable passion due to your daughter's charm. I assure you of my highest respect and ask to be numbered among your friends.

Count.—Ah, my dear friend, you honor and you console me. I esteem, nay, I love you; let this embrace be its token. (They embrace.)

Baron.—Count, may I be permitted to ask a favor?

Count.—By all means; what would I not do for a gentleman of your merit?

Baron.—Let me accompany you to Turin.

Count.—No, excuse me, that is something I cannot permit.

Baron.—And why not?

Count.—I am astonished that you ask. Can an honorable father conduct his own daughter to her husband with a lover by her side?

Baron.—But I accompany you in no character other than the father's friend.

Count.—But one cannot separate easily the friend of the father from the lover of the girl.

Baron.—I'm an honorable man.

Count.—Then be satisfied with my reasons.

Baron.—Very well, if I cannot go with you, at least you cannot prevent my following at a distance.

Count.—But I can, one way or another, prevent your remaining in Turin.

Baron.—How?

Count.—By informing the Court of your dangerous insistence.

Baron.—You are an enemy, then, and sought to flatter me by swearing a false friendship.

Count.—Rather you tried to lull my just suspicions by deceitful phrases.

Baron.—People of my quality do not lie.

Count.—People of your quality ought to know their duty better.

Baron.—I know my duty, and, moreover, I can teach you yours.

Count.—The boldness of your speech is a manifest proof of your bad intentions and your unworthy love.

Baron.—He is no gentleman, sir, that speaks ill of another.

Count.—I am a gentleman and I do not repent of my suspicions.

Baron.—You shall answer for your insults.

Count.—Wait a moment, my sword shall answer for me. (He turns to enter his room.)

Enter the Countess.

Countess.—For Heaven's sake, father, stop!

Count.—Ungrateful daughter. Behold revealed the mystery of your refusal (pointing to the Baron). There stands the man that has instigated your disgraceful disobedience. There's the object of your flame, the man that has caused you to hate your betrothed.

Baron.—(Aside.) Ah! may Heaven grant he speaks truth!

Countess.—No, father, you are mistaken. No one has had the audacity to counsel me, nor am I so easily persuaded and conquered. I cherish my liberty so highly that I dare to defend it against him even that has given me life. No one but you, sir, has the right to command me, and I should obey you blindly were it not a sacrifice so great, so uncertain and so perilous. My heart is still free.

Baron.—(Aside.) And I flattered myself she loved me!

Count.—(Aside.) I wish to assure myself if she is sincere or trying to overreach me. (Aloud.) You fear, then, the Marquis Leonard may prove displeasing?

Countess.—My fear is not unreasonable.

Count.—And, if he isn't to your taste, you are resolved to refuse him?

Countess.—Pardon me, be charitable.

Count.—Truly, I do not wish you to regard me as a tyrant

that would do violence to your heart and make you unhappy forever. I hoped, by taking you away from Milan, to see you more resigned, as I feared you cherished a secret passion. I believe, now, your heart is free. I see that your resistance comes from firm resolutions; and, as I do not wish to compromise my paternal authority in Turin, we shall return to Milan. I shall find some method to reject the Marquis and restore you to full liberty. But as this will cause much gossip and criticism, it will be well for you to choose another,—one that pleases you more. Baron Talismani is a thorough gentleman. I blamed him unjustly, believing him to share your secrets. I see that he is innocent, and am sorry I offended him. If, then, he can forget my vivacity, if he still desires your hand and if you are willing to bestow it upon him, I offer him to you for husband.

Baron.—Ah! Count, you overwhelm me with joy and gratitude. I forget the distress I have suffered to obtain such an amiable wife and such a generous and honorable father-in-law.

Countess.—Gently, sir, these titles of wife and father-in-law are rather premature. I am grateful to my father for his kindness and tender condescension, but I cannot decide so suddenly.

Baron.—Alas! You refuse my hand?

Countess.—The time and circumstances of the offer are unpropitious. You find me on my way to see a husband that has been offered me; you know that I am in danger of displeasing my father by not accepting this husband, or of placing my father in a delicate position should he, to please me, break the contract. Do you think it honorable to make an offer that would open the way to so much dissension and enmity?

Baron.—Excuse me, Miss, you show yourself to be the very spirit of contradiction.

Count.—Pay my daughter proper respect. She is more sensible and shows better judgment than you do.

Baron.—I am quite tired of these continued insults—

Count.—(To the Baron.) Calm yourself a moment. (To his daughter.) What is your intention?

Countess.—To continue our trip, to see the proposed hus-

band and assure myself of his character and habits. Though he may please me but little, if he be honorable and kind I shall prefer him to any other, because chosen by you. Should my heart, however, compel me to strongly dislike him, I will have the courage to manifest my aversion and so gain my freedom and liberate you from the contract. My repose and your honor are equally dear to me.

Count.—Yes, my daughter, it is well thought out, and I flatter myself that Heaven will bring things about to your satisfaction.

Baron.—Whatever may be the scene to come, I shall go to Turin to witness it.

Count.—You will not dare to do it.

Baron.—Your authority is not great enough to prevent it.

Count.—Fools are chastised everywhere.

Baron.—I, a fool, go get your sword.

Countess.—What audacity!

Enter the Lieutenant.

Lieutenant.—Slowly, gentlemen, slowly. A truce to threats. I have heard your dispute, and now that you are about to fight, I come forward to reconcile you.

Count.—Signor, I have not the honor of your acquaintance.

Lieu.—I'm one of his majesty's officers. Lieutenant Malpresti, at your service.

Countess.—And you are the travelling companion of the captain?

Lieu.—(Laughing.) Yes, Signora, of the captain.

Count.—(To his daughter.) How did you get acquainted with this captain?

Countess.—Well, I saw him here—and I spoke to him. He is an intimate friend of the Marquis Leonard. He spoke of him at length, told me of many good traits, but, to be candid, I am not entirely satisfied.

Lieu.—Pay no attention, Signora, to what my companion told you. He is rather capricious; he is very fond of the Marquis, as fond, indeed, as he is of himself, and, as he is too

modest to eulogize himself, he uses the same reticence in speaking of his friend. Rely on me, I know him equally well and am not prevented from speaking by the same delicacy. The Marquis is one of the most honorable, one of the most amiable men in the world.

Baron.—Signor Lieutenant, it's not worth while disturbing yourself to interfere.

Lieu.—Believe me, I do not disturb myself on your account. I stepped out to prevent a duel and to bring calm and joy to the soul of this young lady. If she goes to Turin she fears she will be sacrificed, yet I can assure her that many a girl would welcome such a sacrifice. The Marquis is a well-favored gentleman with a generous heart; and, above all else, is perfectly sincere.

Countess.—All that you say pleases me, especially his sincerity. But, tell me truly, is he not ill-tempered?

Lieu.—Certainly not.

Countess.—Nor jealous?

Lieu.—Not in the least.

Countess.—Doesn't he devote his time to books, conversation and the theatres?

Lieu.—He uses all discretely and with moderation.

Enter the Marquis.

Marquis.—No, Signora, place no faith in what the Lieutenant tells you. He is the Marquis' friend as much as I am, and his great affection leads him to hide the truth.

Lieutenant.—(To the Marquis.) What! you have the courage to tell me I lie?

Marq.—Sincerity constrains me.

Lieu.—Do not believe him, I know the Marquis intimately, Miss.

Marq.—Be assured, Miss, that I know him better than he.

Baron.—And here's a new dispute arising, Signora, on your account!

Marq.—Reassure yourself, sir, we won't fight. The Lieutenant may say whatever he pleases; I insist that while the

Marquis is a man of honor, this young lady must be told that he is given to fits of anger and jealousy. If she is not disposed to accept him with these faults let her return to Milan calmly. She has nothing to fear from the insistence of this gentleman.

Countess.—But how can you vouch for the Marquis?

Marq.—I feel quite sure of what I say, otherwise I would not speak.

Countess.—Excuse me, captain, you make me doubt your sincerity.

Baron.—Ah! Countess, accept the word of an honorable officer. What more do you want? He assures you that the Marquis is not adapted for you.

Marq.—That is not what I said, sir. I said that the refusal of the Countess would not be regarded as an insult from her nor from her father. At another time and place I shall ask of you an explanation of your evil intention.

Baron.—I hope the Marquis will be a more reasonable being!

Countess.—Let us cut short these importunate discussions, by leaving at once, if you are willing, father, for Turin.

Marq.—Spare yourself this trip. I advise you not to go.

Countess.—And for what reason, sir?

Marq.—Because the Marquis will not please you.

Countess.—But you cannot be sure of that.

Marq.—I am most certain.

Countess.—On what grounds?

Marq.—On your own words.

Countess.—Perhaps when I have seen him I shall find him more amiable than you have described him.

Lieu.—You will be content beyond the shadow of a doubt.

Marq.—It is impossible.

Count.—Sir, you make me suspect that you have conceived secret designs upon my daughter's honor, and that you seek to turn her from the contracted marriage.

Baron.—It would be nothing strange if he were an impostor.

Marq.—I marvel at your impudence. I am a man of honor, and to prove it, I shall unmask: I am the Marquis Leonard.

Countess.—(Aside.) Oh Heavens! what a surprise!

Baron.—(Aside.) Ah! I fear my hopes are lost.

Count.—Sir, why did you feel obliged to conceal yourself under a feigned name, and surprise us in this strange manner?

Marq.—Desire to see my bride-to-be has accelerated my trip to Milan, and chance has united all of us at this post-inn. The sincerity of the Countess Beatrice has uncovered her soul to me, while honor has constrained me to inform her of my character and habits. I now perceive that my manner of life does not suit her, that my faults are insupportable and that my person has little to recommend it in her eyes. It would be treason to my heart to exact love of one so noble. She is amiable, virtuous and gracious; but Heaven has not destined her for me.

Countess.—Ah! sir, permit me to tell you that I am not displeased at your appearance, and that I am charmed with your virtues. Can there be in the whole world another man with a soul so generous and so strong a love for truth that he does not hesitate to disparage himself to the one he loves. You are endowed with an excellent heart and a perfect sincerity, can you fear that I will not respect, esteem, adore you? Be angry; with your high principles, anger must have just cause. Be jealous; with you, jealousy must wait for sufficient grounds. Be charmed with society and books; I am persuaded that your friendships and studies will be always praiseworthy. It will be my affair to avoid giving you motives for suspicion or uneasiness, and to so act that a tender and loving wife will not be counted least among your pleasures. Pity my apprehensions, and pardon if I have been too fastidious. Be assured that I love and shall love you always, and that Heaven has made me expressly for you.

Marq.—Ah! if all that you say is true I am the happiest man alive!

Count.—My friend, you have had ample opportunity of learning my daughter's character. She is incapable of falsehood or of being duped by caprice.

Lieu.—Happy the world if such sincere women could be

found, I shall not say in large numbers, but only four or five in the hundred!

Count.—Signor Marquis, if agreeable to you, let us all go to Milan. Once there, according to our previous arrangement, let us conclude the marriage.

Marq.—Yes, let us leave, if it pleases my adorable Countess.

Countess.—Lead me where you will; I'm with my father and my husband, and could not be more content.

Lieu.—Yes, let us go, gentlemen. But, with your permission, let us first enjoy a good dinner and do honor to the precious wine of Monferrato.

Baron.—I confess that I do not deserve to be one of your party, but I pray you to believe me your friend, sorry that I have given you just cause for displeasure. I assure you, sir, that—

Marq.—No more, Signor, I accept your apology; and to prove to my wife that I am neither excessively ill-tempered nor foolishly jealous, I beg you to dine with us and to bear us company during our journey! O journey most felicitous for me! O fortunate post-inn! (Turning to the audience.) Yet more fortunate, if found worthy of the indulgence and favor of those that listen.

The Post-Inn, though little read and seldom acted, is undoubtedly one of the best of Goldoni's comedies. While the plot is slight, the situations are effective and are never overstrained; the dialogue is sprightly and vivacious, witty in places and never tedious, and without any trace of coarseness or vulgarity. We find here all the grace and elegance characteristic of the Italian drama; for the Italian people, even more than the French, are a nation of artists; they are, moreover, natural artists, following no rules or traditions, as do their northern neighbors, but with the utmost reverence for the great masterpieces bequeathed to them as heirlooms

by those whom the world has exalted to the highest pinnacle in the temple of fame. Nowhere are the manners and tastes of a people so clearly reflected as in their drama; and though Goldoni's comedy does not deal with art, it gives us the drama in its most artistic form. Especially fine are the speeches of Beatrice toward the end, where her lover reveals his true identity, and his mistress, womanlike, loves him the more for the faults she had condemned, but which seem to her as virtues when confessed by his own lips.

MYRRHA

BY VITTORIO ALFIERI.

*(Translated from the Italian and Edited by
Edgar A. Bowring, C.B.)*

PERSONAGES.

CINYRAS.

CECRIS, *his Wife.*

MYRRHA, *his Daughter.*

PEREUS, *Myrrha's Lover.*

EURYCLEIA, *Cecris' Friend.*

CHORUS.

PRIESTS.

PEOPLE.

SCENE—THE PALACE IN CYPRUS.

Myrrha.

ARGUMENT.

Myrrha, the daughter and only child of Cinyras, King of Cyprus, and his wife Cenchreis—or Cecris, as Alfieri calls her—is betrothed to Pereus, heir to the throne of Epirus, and the scene is laid just before the proposed wedding. But Myrrha, while recognizing the merits of the prince, suffers in secret from an anguish that she cannot, or will not, explain. In the midst of the ceremony she is seized with an attack of frenzy, and announces that the Furies have taken possession of her, whereupon Pereus puts an end to their marriage, rushes off in despair, and kills himself. Myrrha's father tells her the story of Pereus' death, and says he is satisfied she is in love with some one else, promising that, whoever it may be, he will consent to her union with him. At last, when hard pressed, she lets slip words which show it is with himself she is in love. Then she seizes her father's dagger and stabs herself, inflicting a fatal wound. The story is taken from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and though condemned by some critics, including Schlegel and Sismondi, was highly commended by others, and was a special favorite with the author.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Cecris, Eurycleia.

Cecris.—Come, faithful Eurycleia: now the dawn
Scarce glimmers; and to me so soon as this
My royal consort is not wont to come.
Now, thou canst tell me all that thou dost know
Of our afflicted daughter. Even now
Thy troubled face, and thy half-stifled sighs,
Announce to me . . .

Eurycleia.— O queen! . . . Unhappy Myrrha
Drags on a life far worse than any death.
I dare not to the monarch represent
Her dreadful state: the troubles of a maiden
Ill could a father understand; thou canst,
A mother. Hence to thee I come; and pray
That thou wilt hear me.

Ce.— . . . It is true, that I
For a long time have seen the lustre languish
Of her rare beauty; obstinate and mute,
A mortal melancholy dims in her
That fascinating look: and, could she weep! . . .
But, when with me, she's silent; and her eyes
With tears are pregnant, though forever dry.
In vain do I embrace her; and in vain
Request, entreat her, to divulge her grief:
Her sorrow she denies; while day by day
I see her by her grief consumed.

Eu.— . . . A daughter
To you is she by blood; to me, by love;
Thou knowest that I brought her up: and I
Exist in her alone; and almost half
Of the fourth lustre is already spent,
Since ev'ry day I've clasp'd her to my breast
In my fond arms. . . . And now, can it be true,
That e'en to me, to whom she was accusom'd
From earliest childhood to divulge each thought,
That e'en to me she now appears reserved?

And if I speak to her of her distress,
To me too she denies it, and insists,
And seems displeased with me. . . . But yet she oft,
Spite of herself, bursts into tears before me.

Ce.—Such sadness, in a bosom still so young,
At first I deem'd to be the consequence
Of the irresolution which she felt,
In the oft-urged selection of a spouse.
The most illustrious, pow'rful potentates
Of Greece and Asia, all in rivalry
From the wide-spreading rumor of her beauty,
To Cyprus flock'd: and, as respected us,
She was the perfect mistress of her choice.
These various impulses, unknown, discordant,
Might in a youthful bosom well excite
No slight disturbance. She his valor praised
In one; his courteous manners in another:
This with a larger kingdom was endow'd;
In that were majesty and comeliness
Blended consummately: and he who caught
Her eyes the most, she fear'd perchance the least
Might gratify her father. Thoroughly
I, as a mother and a woman, know
What conflicts, in the young unpractised hearts
Of timid virgins, might be well excited
By such uncertainty. But, when by Pereus,
Heir of Epirus, ev'ry doubt seem'd banish'd;
To whom, for pow'r, nobility, and youth,
Valor, and comeliness, and sense, not one
Could be compared; then, when the lofty choice
Of Myrrha gave such pleasure to us all;
When she, on this account, ought to exult
With self-congratulation; we behold
The storm more furiously arise within her,
And more insufferable agonies
Consume her ev'ry day! . . . At such a sight,
I feel my heart as if asunder torn.

Eu.—Ah, had she never made that fatal choice!
From that day forth, her anguish has increased:
This very night, the last one that precedes

Her lofty nuptial rites (O Heav'ns!), I fear'd
 That it had been to her the last of life.—
 Motionless, silent, lay I in my bed,
 From hers not far remote; and, still intent
 On all her movements, made pretence to sleep:
 But I for months and months have now beheld her
 In such a martyrdom, that all repose
 Flies from my aged limbs. I for thy daughter
 The comfort of benignant Sleep invoked
 Most silently within myself; for o'er her
 For many, many nights he has not spread
 His downy wings.—Her sobs and sighs at first
 Were almost smother'd; they were few; were broken:
 Then (hearing me no longer) they increased
 To such ungovernable agony,
 That, at the last, against her will, they changed
 To bitter tears, to sobs, to piercing screams.
 Amid her lamentations, from her lips
 One word alone escaped: "Death! . . . death!"; and oft,
 In broken accents, she repeated it.
 I started from my couch; and hastily
 I ran to her: and scarce had she beheld me,
 When, in the midst, she suddenly repress'd
 Each tear, each sigh, each word; and, recomposed
 In royal stateliness, as if almost
 Incensed with me, in accents calm she cried:
 "Why comest thou to me? what wouldst thou with
 me?" . . .
 I could not answer her; I wept, embraced her,
 Then wept again. . . . At length my speech return'd.
 O! how did I implore her, how conjure her,
 To tell me her affliction, which, at last,
 Thus in her bosom pent, would, with her life,
 My life destroy! . . . Thou surely, though a mother,
 Couldst not have spoken to her with more fond,
 And more persuasive love.—She well doth know
 How much I love her; and, at my discourse,
 Once more the torrents from her eyes gush'd forth,
 And she embraced me, and with tenderness
 To my fond importunities replied,

But still, inflexibly reserved, she said
 That ev'ry maiden, when the nuptial day
 Approaches, is oppress'd with transient grief;
 And she commanded me to hide it from you.
 But so deep-rooted is her malady,
 So fearful are its inward ravages,
 That I run tremblingly to thee; and beg
 That, by thy means, these rites may be delay'd:
 To death the maiden goes, be sure of this.—
 Thou art a mother; I say nothing more.

Ce.— . . . Ah! . . . choked by weeping . . . scarcely . . . can I
 speak.—

Whence can this malady arise, ah, whence? . . .
 No other martyrdom, at her young age,
 Is there, except the martyrdom of love.
 But, if she is inflamed by love for Pereus,
 Whom of her own accord she chose, say, whence,
 When on the point of gaining him, this grief?
 And, if another flame feed on her heart,
 Wherefore hath she herself selected Pereus
 Among so many others?

Eu.— . . . Her fierce grief
 Doth not, I swear to thee, arise from love.
 She always was observed by me; nor could she,
 Without my seeing it, resign her heart
 To any passion. And she would, be sure,
 Have told it me; her mother as to years,
 But, in our love, a sister. Her deportment,
 Her countenance, her sighs, her very silence,
 Ah! all convince me that she loves not Pereus.
 She, if not joyous, was, before she chose him,
 Tranquil at least: and thou know'st well how she
 Delay'd her choice. But yet, assuredly
 No other man pleased her, ere she saw Pereus:
 'Tis true, she seem'd to give to him the preference,
 Because it was, or so at least she deem'd it,
 Her duty to choose one. She loves him not;
 To me it seems so: yet, what other suitor,
 Compared with noble Pereus, can she love?
 I know her to possess a lofty heart;

A heart in which a flame, that is not lofty,
 Could never enter. This I safely swear:
 The man that she could love, of royal blood
 Must be; or else she would not be his lover.
 Now, who of these ye have admitted here,
 Whom at her will she could not with her hand
 Make happy? Then her grief is not from love.
 Love, though it feeds itself with tears and sighs,
 Yet still it leaves I know not what of hope,
 That vivifies the centre of the heart;
 But not a ray of hope is gleaming on her:
 Incurable her wound; alas, too surely! . . .
 Ah, could the death, that she invokes forever,
 Be granted first to me! I should, at least,
 Not see her thus by a slow fire consumed! . . .

Ce.—Thou dost distract me. . . . To these marriage rites
 Never will I consent, if they are destined
 To take from us our only daughter. . . . Go;
 Return to her; and do not say to her
 That thou hast spoken with me. I myself,
 Soon as the tears are from my eyes dispersed,
 And my face recomposed, will thither come.

Eu.—Ah! quickly come. I will return to her;
 I am impatient once more to behold her.
 O Heav'ns! who knows if she has not once more
 Been with these frantic paroxysms seized,
 While I have thus at length with thee conversed?
 Alas! what pity do I feel for thee,
 Unhappy mother! . . . I fly hence; but thou,
 Ah, linger not! . . . The less that thou delayest,
 The more good wilt thou do. . . .

Ce.—How much delay
 Costs me, thou mayst conceive: but I will not
 Call her at such an unaccustom'd hour,
 Nor go to her, much less present myself
 With troubled countenance. It is not fit
 To strike her either with distress, or fear:
 So modest, timid, pliable is she,
 That no means with that noble disposition

Can be too gentle. Quickly go; in me
Repose, as I in thee alone repose.

SCENE II.

Cecris.

Cecris.—What can it be? A year has well-nigh pass'd,
Since I was first tormented by her grief;
And yet no trace whence Myrrha's sorrow springs
Can I discern!—Perchance the gods themselves,
Envious of our prosperity, would snatch
From us so rare a daughter, the sole comfort,
Sole hope of both her parents? O ye gods,
'Twere better never to have giv'n her to us!
O Venus! thou sublime divinity
Of this to thee devoted, sacred isle,
Perchance her too great beauty moves thy envy?
And hence perchance thou, equally with her,
Reducest me to this distracted state?
Ah! yes, thou wilt that I should thus atone
In tears of blood, for my inordinate,
Presumptuous transports of a loving mother. . . .

SCENE III.

Cinyras, Cecris.

Cinyras.—Weep not, O lady. I have briefly heard
The painful narrative; to this disclosure
Constrain'd I Eurycleia. Ah! believe me,
Sooner a thousand times would I expire,
Than with our idolized and only daughter
Adopt coercive means. Who could have thought
That by this marriage, which was once her choice,
She could be brought to such extremity?
But, let it be dissolved. My life, my realm,
And e'en my glory are as nothing worth,
If I see not our only daughter happy.

Cecris.—Yet, Myrrha ne'er was fickle. We beheld her
 In understanding far surpass her years;
 Discreet in ev'ry wish; and constant, eager
 Our smallest wishes to anticipate.
 She knows full well, that in her noble choice
 We deem'd ourselves most fortunate: she cannot,
 No, never, hence repent of it.

Cin.— But yet,
 If she in heart repent of it?—O lady,
 Hear her: and all a mother's gentle pleadings
 Do thou adopt with her; do thou at length
 Compel her to unfold her heart to thee,
 While there is time for this. And I meanwhile
 Will mine unfold to thee; and I assure thee,
 Nay, e'en I swear, that, of my heart's first thoughts,
 My daughter is the object. It is true,
 Epirus' king I wished to make my friend:
 And the young Pereus, his distinguish'd son,
 Adds, to the future hope of a rich kingdom,
 Other advantages, in my esteem
 More precious far. A gentle character,
 A heart no less compassionate than lofty,
 Doth he evince. Besides, he seems to me
 By Myrrha's beauties fervently inflamed.—
 I never could select a worthier consort
 To make my daughter happy; and no doubts
 Of these pledged marriage rites torment his heart;
 His father's indignation and his own,
 If we renounced our covenanted faith,
 Would be most just; and their rage might to us
 Be even terrible: in this behold
 Many and potent reasons in the eyes
 Of ev'ry other prince; but none in mine.
 Nature made me a father; chance, a king.
 Those which are deem'd by others of my rank
 Reasons of state, to which they are accusom'd
 To make all natural affections yield,
 In my paternal bosom would not weigh
 Against one single sigh of my dear daughter.
 I, by her happiness alone, can be

Myself made happy. Go; say this to her;
 Assure her, also, that she need not fear
 Displeasing me, in telling me the truth:
 Naught let her fear, except the making us,
 Through her own means, unhappy. I meanwhile,
 By questions artfully proposed, will learn
 From Pereus if he deem his love return'd;
 And thus will I prepare him for the issue,
 No less afflicting to himself than me.
 But yet, the time is brief for doing this,
 If fate decree that we retract our purpose.

Ce.—Thou speakest well: I fly to her.—It brings
 Great solace to me, in our grief, to see
 That one accordant will, one love, is ours.

ACT II. SCENE I.

Cinyras, Pereus.

Pereus.—Behold me here, obedient to thy wishes.
 I hope, O king, the hour is not far distant,
 When with the loving epithet of father
 I may accost thee. . . .

Cinyras.— Listen to me, Pereus.—
 If thou well know thyself, thou canst not fail
 To be convinced what happiness a father
 Who loves his only daughter must experience
 At having thee as son-in-law. 'Tis certain,
 Had I myself been destined to select
 A spouse for Myrrha, I had chosen thee
 Among the many and illustrious rivals
 Who, with thyself, contended for her hand.
 Thence, thou thyself mayst judge how doubly dear
 Thou wert to me, when by herself elected.
 Thou, in the judgment of impartial men,
 In all pretensions wert unparagon'd;
 But, in my judgment, more than for thy blood,
 And thy paternal kingdom, thou both wert,
 And art, the first for other qualities

Intrinsically thine, whence thou wouldst be,
 E'en if a private man, eternally
 Greater than any king. . . .

Pe.— Ah father! . . . (I
 E'en now exult to call thee by this name)
 Father, my greatest, nay, my only prize,
 Consists in pleasing thee. I have presumed
 To interrupt thee; pardon me: but I
 Cannot, before I merit them, receive
 From thee so many praises. To my heart
 Thy speech will be a high encouragement,
 To make me that which thou believ'st me now,
 Or wishest me to be. Thy son-in-law,
 And Myrrha's consort, largely should I be
 With ev'ry lofty quality endow'd:
 And I accept from thee the augury
 Of virtue.

Cin.— Ah! thou speakest as thou art.—
 And, since thou art such, I shall dare to speak
 To thee as to a son.—I clearly see
 Thou lovest Myrrha with a genuine love;
 And I should wrong thee most unworthily,
 Could I e'en doubt of this. But, . . . tell me now; . . .
 If my request is not too indiscreet,
 Art thou as much beloved?

Pe.— . . . I ought to hide
 Nothing from thee.—Ah! Myrrha would, methinks,
 Love me again, and yet it seems she cannot.
 I cherish'd once a hope of her regard;
 And yet I hope to gain it; or, at least,
 My flatt'ring wishes still prolong the dream.
 'Tis true, that, most inexplicably, she
 Persists in her reserve. Thou, Cinyras,
 Although thou be a father, still retainest
 Thy youthful vigor, and remember'st love:
 Know then, that evermore with trembling steps,
 And as if by compulsion, she accosts me;
 Over her face a deadly pallor steals;
 Her lovely eyes are never turned towards me;
 A few irresolute and broken words

She falters out, involved in mortal coldness;
 Her eyes, eternally suffused with tears,
 She fixes on the ground; in speechless grief
 Her soul is buried; a pale sickliness
 Dims, not annihilates, her charms divine:—
 Behold her state. Yet, of connubial rites
 She speaks; and now thou wouldst pronounce that she
 Desired those rites; now, that, far worse than death,
 She dreaded them; now, she herself assigns
 The day for them, and now, she puts it off.
 If I inquire the reason of her sadness,
 Her lip denies it; but her countenance,
 Of agony expressive, and of death,
 Proclaims her great, incurable despair.
 Me she assures, and each returning day
 Repeats, that she would have me as her spouse;
 She says not that she loves me; lofty, noble,
 She knows not how to feign. I wish and fear
 To hear from her the truth: I check my tears;
 I burn, I languish, and I dare not speak.
 Now from her faith, reluctantly bestow'd,
 Would I myself release her; now again
 I fain would die, since to resign her quite
 I have no pow'r; yet, unpossess'd her heart,
 Her person would I not possess. . . . Alas! . . .
 Whether I live or die, I scarcely know.—
 Thus, both oppress'd, and though with diff'rent griefs,
 Both with affliction equally weigh'd down,
 We have at last the fatal day attain'd,
 The day which she herself irrevocably
 Hath chosen for our marriage. . . . Ah, were I
 The only victim of such deep distress!

Cin.—As much as she, dost thou excite my pity. . . .

Thy frank and fervid eloquence bespeaks
 A soul humane and lofty: such a soul
 Did I ascribe to thee; hence to thyself
 I will not less ingenuously speak.—
 I tremble for my child. I share with thee
 A lover's grief; ah, prince! do thou too share
 A father's grief with me. Ah, if she were

Unhappy by my means! . . . 'Tis true, she chose thee;
 'Tis true that none constrain'd her . . . but, if fear,
 Or maiden modesty . . . In short, if Myrrha
 Now should repent her promise wrongfully? . . .

Pe.—No more; I understand thee. To a lover,
 Who loves as I do, canst thou represent
 The cherish'd object wretched for his sake?
 Could I, though innocently, deem myself
 The origin of all her wretchedness,
 And not expire with grief?—Ah! Myrrha, now
 Pronounce on me, and on my destiny,
 A final sentence: fearlessly pronounce it,
 If Pereus' love be irksome: yet for this
 Never shall I regret that I have loved thee.
 O, could I make her joyful by my tears! . . .
 To me 'twould be a blessing e'en to die,
 So that she might be happy.

Cin.—Pereus, who
 Can hear thee without weeping? . . . No, a heart
 More faithful, more impassion'd than thine own,
 There cannot be. Ah! as thou hast to me,
 Couldst thou disclose it also to my daughter:
 She could not hear thee, and refuse to open
 To thee with equal confidence her own.
 I do not think that she repents her choice
 (Who, knowing thee, could do this?); but perchance
 Thou mayst solicit from her heart the source
 Of her conceal'd distress.—Behold, she comes;
 I had already summon'd her. With her
 I leave thee; to the interview of lovers,
 Fathers are ever a restraint. Now, prince,
 Fully reveal to her thy lofty heart,
 A heart by which all others must be sway'd.

SCENE II.

Myrrha, Pereus.

Myrrha.—With Pereus doth he leave me? . . . Fatal trial!
 This rends my heart indeed. . . .

Pereus.—

At length, O Myrrha,

The day is come, which, wert thou only happy,
Should render me supremely happy also.
Thy hair with nuptial coronal adorn'd,
Thy form enveloped in a festal robe,
I see indeed: but on thy countenance,
Thy looks, thy gestures, and in ev'ry step,
Pale melancholy lours. O Myrrha, he
Who loves thee more, far more than life itself,
Cannot behold thee with a mien like this
To an indissoluble tie approach.
This is the hour, the solemn hour is this,
When 'tis no more allowable for thee
To pass delusions on thyself, or others.
Thou shouldst divulge to me (whate'er it be)
The cause of thy distress; or shouldst at least
Confess that thou dost not confide in me;
That I have ill-responded to thy choice,
And that at heart thou hast repented of it.
I shall not hence account that I am wrong'd;
O no! though this sad heart will be surcharged
With mortal wretchedness. But, what car'st thou
For the distraction of a man not loved,
And slenderly esteem'd? It too much now
Concerns me not to render thee unhappy.—
Then speak to me explicitly and boldly.—
But, thou art mute and motionless! . . . Thy silence
Breathes but disdain and death . . . thy silence is
An answer too decisive: thou dost hate me;
And dar'st not say it. . . . Now resume thy faith:
I instantly prepare myself to fly
Forever from thine eyes, since I am thus
An object of aversion. . . . But if I
Was always so, how could I win thy choice?
If I became so afterwards, ah, tell me;
In what I have offended thee?

My.—

. . . O prince! . . .

Thy overweening love depicts my grief
More poignant than it is. Beyond the bounds
Of truth thy heated phantasy impels thee.

With silence thy unprecedented words
 I hear; what wonder? unexpected things,
 And little pleasing, and, e'en more than this,
 Not true, dost thou express: how can I then
 Reply to thee?—This, for our nuptial rites,
 Is the appointed day; I come prepared
 For their fulfilment; does my chosen spouse
 Venture meanwhile to harbor doubts of me?
 'Tis true, perchance my spirits are not radiant,
 As hers should be who doth obtain a spouse
 Distinguish'd like thyself: but pensiveness
 Is oft a second nature; ill could one
 Who feels its potent sway, explain the cause:
 And often an officious questioning,
 Instead of making manifest the cause,
 Redoubles the effect.

Pe.—

I'm irksome to thee;

I see it by unquestionable symptoms.
 I knew indeed that thou couldst never love me;
 Yet in my feeble heart I had caress'd
 At least the flatt'ring hope thou didst not hate me:
 In time, for thine and my peace, I discern
 That I deceived myself.—'Tis not (alas!)
 Within my pow'r to make thee hate me not:
 But on myself doth it alone depend
 To make thee not despise me. Now art thou
 Freed, and released from all thy promised faith.
 Against thy will 'twere vain to keep thy promise:
 Not by thy parents, and still less by me,
 But by false shame, art thou restrain'd. Thou wouldst,
 Not to incur the blame of fickleness,
 Render thyself, thine own worst enemy,
 The victim of thy error: and dost thou
 Hope I should suffer this? Ah, no!—That I
 Love thee, that I perchance deserved thee, this
 I ought to prove now, by refusing thee. . . .

My.—Thou dost delight to drive me to despair. . . .

Ah! how can I be joyous in thy presence,
 If I am destined always to behold
 Thy love ill-pleased with mine? Can I assign

The causes of a grief, which, in great measure,
 Is but supposititious? which, indeed,
 If true in part, p'rhaps has no other cause,
 Than the new state which I'm about to enter;
 The sad necessity of separation
 From my beloved parents; and the words
 So oft repeated to myself: "Ah! maybe
 I never more shall see them;" . . . the departure
 For other realms unknown; the change of sky; . . .
 And other thoughts, by thousands and by thousands,
 All passionate and tender, and all sad;
 And all indisputably better known,
 And felt more keenly, than by any other,
 By thy humane and courteous lofty heart!—
 I gave myself spontaneously to thee:
 Nor do I feel repentance; this I swear.
 If it were so, I would have told it to thee:
 Thee, above all men, I esteem: from thee
 Nothing would I conceal, . . . that I would not
 Likewise from my own consciousness conceal.
 Now, I implore; let him who loves me best,
 Speak to me least of this my wretchedness,
 And 'twill in time, I feel assured, depart.
 Could I, not prizing thee, give thee my hand,
 I should despise myself: and how not prize thee? . . .
 My lips could never utter what my heart
 Doth not dictate: and yet those lips assure thee,
 Swear to thee, that I never will belong
 To any one but thee. What more can I
 Profess to thee?

Pe.— . . . Alas! I venture not
 To ask of thee one thing, which, couldst thou say it,
 Would give me life. But fatal the demand!
 'Twere death, I fear, to be assured of this.—
 Thou to be mine, then, dost not now disdain?
 Dost not repent of it? and no delay? . . .
My.—No; 'tis the day; to-day will I be thine.—
 But, let our sails be hoisted to the winds
 To-morrow, and forever let us leave
 These shores behind us.

Pe.— Do I hear thee rightly?

With such abrupt transition how canst thou
Thus differ from thyself? It tortures thee
So much to have to leave thy parents dear,
Thy native country; yet wouldst thou depart
Thus speedily, forever? . . .

My.— Yes; . . . forever

Will I abandon them; . . . and die . . . of grief. . . .

Pe.—What do I hear? Thy anguish hath betray'd thee; . . .

Thy words and looks are prompted by despair.

I swear that I will never be the means

Of thy destruction; never; of my own

Too certainly. . . .

My.— 'Tis true; 'tis too, too true;

I am distracted by a mighty woe. . . .

But no, believe me not.—Inflexibly

I to my purpose keep.—While I have thus

My bosom harden'd as it were with grief,

My parting hence will be less keenly felt:

A solace in thyself. . . .

Pe.— No, Myrrha, no:

I am the cause, I am (though innocent),

Of the dread conflict, which thus lacerates,

And agitates thy heart.—My hateful presence

No longer shall impose restraint on thee.—

Do thou thyself, O Myrrha, to thy parents

Propose some means, that may deliver thee

From ties so inauspicious; or from them

Thou'lt hear to-day the cruel death of Pereus.

SCENE III.

Myrrha.

Myrrha.—Ah, go not to my parents! . . . Hear me, . . . hear
me! . . .

He flies from me. . . . O Heav'n's! what have I said?

Let me to Eurycleia quickly run:

No, not one instant would I with myself

Remain alone. . . .

SCENE IV.

Myrrha, Eurycleia.

Eurycleia.— O whither dost thou fly
Thus with such breathless haste, belovèd daughter?

Myrrha.—Where can I find, if not in thee, some solace? . . .
To thee I came. . . .

Eu.— I, from a distance, long
Have watch'd thee carefully. Thou knowest well,
I never can abandon thee: I hope
That thou wilt pardon me. From thence I saw
Pereus rush troubled forth; and thee I find
With heavier grief oppress'd: ah! dearest daughter;
Thy tears at least may freely have a vent
Upon my breast.

My.— Ah, yes; dear Eurycleia,
With thee I may at least shed tears. . . . I feel
As if my heart would burst from checking them. . . .

Eu.—And wilt thou, in a state like this, persist,
O daughter, in these hymeneal rites?

My.—I hope my agony may kill me first. . . .
But no; that cannot be; the time's too short; . . .
It afterwards will kill me, kill me soon. . . .
Death, death, I have no other wish but death; . . .
And death alone is all that I deserve.

Eu.—Myrrha, no other furies can assail
With such barbarity thy youthful breast,
Save those of love. . . .

My.— What dar'st thou say to me?
What cruel falsehood? . . .

Eu.— Ah, do not, I pray thee,
Be wroth with me. For a long time I've thought so:
But if it thus displease thee, I will dare
No more to say it to thee. Ah, mayst thou
Preserve with me the liberty of weeping!
Neither do I know well if I believe
What I have said; moreover, to thy mother
I hitherto have solemnly denied it. . . .

My.—What do I hear? O Heav'ns! does she perchance
Also suspect it? . . .

Eu.— And who, seeing thus
A tender maiden in excessive grief,
Would not deem love the origin of this?
Ah! were thy grief from love alone! at least
Some remedy might then be found.—Immersed
For a long time in this perplexing doubt,
I to the holy altar went one day
Of Venus, our sublime divinity;
With tears, with incense, and persuasive prayers,
With mournful heart, before her sacred image
Prostrate, I ventured to pronounce thy name. . . .

My.—Ah! what audacity! what hast thou done?
Venus? . . . O Heav'ns! . . . inimical to me. . . .
The force of her implacable revenge. . . .
What do I say? . . . Alas! . . . I shudder, . . . trem-
ble. . . .

Eu.—'Tis true indeed that I in this did wrong:
The angry deity disdain'd my vows;
The incense, in a smold'ring gloom involved,
With difficulty burn'd; and, downwards driven,
The smoke collected round my hoary head.
Wouldst thou hear further? I presumed to raise
To the stern image my afflicted eyes,
And, horribly incensed with indignation,
With threat'ning looks the goddess seem'd to me
Herself to drive me from her sacred feet.
With trembling steps, I totter'd from the temple,
Palsied with fear. . . . In telling this, I feel
My hair with horror once more stand on end.

My.—And thou with terror mak'st me also shudder.
What hast thou dared to do? By Myrrha now
Must no celestial pow'r, and much less that
Of our tremendous goddess, be invoked.
I am abandon'd by the gods; my breast
Is open to the onslaught of the Furies;
There they alone authority possess,
And residence.—Ah! if there still remains

In thee the shadow of a genuine pity,
 My faithful Eurycleia (thou alone
 Canst do it), save me from despair: 'tis slow,
 Too slow, although 'tis infinite, my grief.

Eu.—Thou mak'st me tremble. . . . What can I?

My.— . . . I ask thee

My woes to shorten. My weak frame thou seest
 Wearing away by little and by little;
 My ling'ring agonies destroy my parents;
 A burden to myself, a curse to others,
 I never can escape: 'twere pity, love,
 To expedite my death; from thee I ask it. . . .

Eu.—O Heav'ns! . . . from me? . . . My very utt'rance
 fails, . . .

My breath, . . . my thoughts—

My.— Ah, no; thou lov'st me not.

I weakly deem'd that in thy aged breast
 There dwelt a comprehensive tenderness. . . .
 Yet thou thyself didst in my tender years
 Exhort me to nobility of thought:
 Oft have I heard from thee, how virtuous souls
 Should death prefer to infamy. Alas! . . .
 What do I say? . . . But thou dost hear me not? . . .
 Motionless, . . . mute, . . . thou scarcely breath'st! O
 Heav'ns! . . .

What have I said? distracted with my pangs, . . .

I know not what I said: ah! pardon me;

My second mother, be once more thyself.

Eu.— . . . O daughter, daughter! . . . Thou ask death from me?
 Thou death from me?

My.— Esteem me not ungrateful;

And think not that the anguish of my woes

Robs me of pity for the pangs of others.—

Wouldst thou not see me dead in Cyprus? soon

Thou'lt hear that I Epirus reach'd, a corpse.

Eu.—'Twere vain, then, to endure these dreadful nuptials.

I to thy parents fly to tell the whole—

My.—Ah, do it not, or irretrievably

Thou forfeitest my love: ah, do it not;

I pray thee: in the name of thy true love,
 I do conjure thee.—From a troubled heart
 Accents escape, which should not be recorded.—
 An ample solace (one which hitherto
 I've not allow'd) hath been my tears with thee;
 The speaking of my grief: in me already
 My courage hence is doubled.—A few hours
 Are wanting to the solemn nuptial rites:
 Be ever near me: let us go: meanwhile,
 It is thy province to confirm me more
 In my inevitable lofty purpose.
 Thou, by thy faithful counsel, and thy more
 Than mother's love, at once shouldst strengthen me.
 Thou shouldst so act, that firmly I may follow
 The sole remaining honorable track.

ACT III. SCENE I.

Cinyras, Cecris.

Cecris.—There is no doubt that Pereus, though he be
 Not yet return'd to us, by Myrrha's words
 Was greatly mortified. She loves him not;
 Of this I'm sure; she'll go to certain death,
 If in these nuptials she should persevere.

Cinyras.—For the last trial now, will we ourselves
 Hear from her lips the truth. I, in thy name,
 Have summon'd her to meet thee in this place.
 Neither of us, in short, would force her will:
 How much we love her, well she knows, to whom
 Ourselves are not less dear. To me it seems
 Now utterly impossible, that she,
 In this respect, should close to us her heart;
 To us, who made her arbitress and mistress
 Not only of herself, but of ourselves.

Ce.—Behold, she comes: and O! she seems to me
 Somewhat more joyful; and her step more firm. . . .
 Ah! could she be again what once she was!
 At the sole reappearance in her face

E'en of a flash of joy, I quickly seem
Restored once more to life.

SCENE II.

Myrrha, Cinyras, Cecris.

- Cecris.*— Belovèd daughter,
Ah, come to us! ah, come!
- Myrrha.*— What do I see?
O Heav'ns! my father also! . . .
- Cinyras.*— Haste, advance;
Our only hope and life; advance securely;
And do not fear the aspect of thy father,
More than thou fear'st thy mother's. We are both
Ready to hear thee. Now, if thou art pleased
The cause to tell us of thy cruel state,
Thou giv'st us life; but if it please thee
Rather to hide it, thou mayst also, daughter,
Conceal it; for thy pleasure will be ours.
Before the nuptial knot is tied forever,
One hour alone is wanting; ev'ry one
Deems it a thing decided: but, if yet
Thy will is changed; if thy committed faith
Be irksome to thy heart; if thy free choice,
Though once spontaneous, be no longer such;
Be bold, fear nothing in the world, reveal
All the misgivings of thy heart to us.
Thou art by nothing bound; and we ourselves
The first release thee; and the gen'rous Pereus,
Worthy of thee, confirms this liberty.
Nor will we tax thee with inconstancy:
Rather will we admit, that thoughts mature,
Though unforeseen, constrain thee to this change.
By reasons base thou never canst be moved:
Thy noble character, thy lofty thoughts,
Thy love for us, full well we know them all:
A step of thee, and of thy blood unworthy,
Thou never couldst e'en think of. Freely, then,

Do thou fulfill thy wish; provided thou
 Art once more happy, with that happiness
 Thou renderest thy parents happy also.
 Now, this thy present will, whate'er it be,
 Do thou to us reveal it, as to brothers.

Ce.—Ah, yes! thou see'st it well; for ne'er didst thou
 Hear words of more persuasive tenderness,
 More mild, more tender, from thy mother's lips
 Than these.

My.— . . . Is there a torment in the world,
 That can compare with mine? . . .

Ce.— But what is this?
 Sighing, thou talkest to thyself?

Cin.— Ah, let,
 Ah, let thy heart speak to us: we will use
 No other language with thee.—Quick, reply.

My.— . . . My lord . . .

Cin.— Ah, Myrrha, 'tis a sad beginning:
 To thee I am a father; not a lord:
 Canst thou invoke me with another name,
 O daughter?

My.— Myrrha, this is the last conflict.—
 Be strong, my soul. . . .

Ce.— O Heav'ns! The hues of death
 Upon her countenance . . .

My.— On mine? . . .

Cin.— But whence
 Tremblest thou thus? at me? . . .

My.— I tremble not, . . .
 Methinks; . . . or I, at least, no more shall tremble,
 Since ye now so compassionately hear me.—
 Your only, your too well belovèd daughter,
 Well know I that I am. I see you always,
 My joys enjoying, grieving in my griefs;
 E'en this my grief increases. Mine, alas!
 Passes the bounds of natural distress;
 In vain I hide it; and to you would speak it, . . .
 If I knew it myself. My fatal sadness

With growing years augmented ev'ry day,
 Long ere, amid th' illustrious company
 Of noble suitors, Pereus I selected.
 Within my breast an angry deity,
 Unknown, inexorable, dwells; and hence,
 All pow'r of mine is vain against his pow'r. . . .
 Mother, believe me; though I be but young,
 My mind, e'en passing ordinary strength,
 Was, and is, strong: but my distemper'd frame
 Is fast succumbing; . . . and I feel myself,
 With gradual footsteps, tott'ring to the tomb. . . .
 —My rare and little food to me is poison:
 Sleep everlastingly forsakes my pillow;
 Or dreams, with horrid images of death,
 Give greater martyrdom than sleepless nights:
 I do not find, throughout the day or night,
 A moment's peace, repose, or resting place.
 Yet nothing in the shape of human comfort
 Do I presume to covet; death I deem,
 Expect, solicit, as my only cure.
 But, for my punishment, still Nature keeps me,
 With her strong ties, alive. I pity now,
 And now I hate, myself: I weep, and rave,
 And weep again. . . . This, this is the incessant,
 Insufferable, fierce vicissitude,
 In which I drag along my heavy days.—
 But what? . . . do ye, too, at my horrid state
 Shed tears? . . . Belovèd mother! . . . let me then,
 To thy breast clinging, drinking in thy tears,
 Forego the sense of suff'ring for a moment! . . .

Ce.—Belovèd daughter, at a tale like this,
 Who could refrain from weeping? . . .

Cin.—At her words
 I feel my bosom rent. . . . But finally,
 What ought we now to do? . . .

My.—But finally
 (Ah! trust to what I say), I ne'er conceived
 The wish to vex you, or extort from you
 Vain pity for myself, describing thus

My fierce unutterable pangs.—When I,
 By choosing Pereus, fix'd my destiny,
 At first, 'tis true, I to myself appear'd
 Somewhat less troubled; but, within my heart
 Proportionably fierce my grief return'd,
 As nearer and more near the day approach'd
 For forming the indissoluble tie;
 So much so, that three times indeed I dared
 To beg you to procrastinate the day.
 In these delays I somewhat calm'd myself;
 But, as the time diminish'd, all my pangs
 Resumed their wonted fierceness. To their height,
 To my consummate shame, consummate grief,
 Are they to-day arrived: but something tells me
 That they, to-day, are giving in my breast
 The last proof of their strength. This day shall see me
 The spouse of Pereus, or a breathless corpse.

Ce.—What do I hear? . . . O daughter! . . . Wilt thou thus
 In these lugubrious nuptials persevere? . . .

Cin.—No, this shall never be. Thou lov'st not Pereus;
 And, spite of inclination, thou, in vain,
 Wouldst give thyself to him. . . .

My.—Ah, do not ye
 Take me from him; or quickly give me death. . . .
 'Tis true, perchance, I love him not as much
 As he loves me; . . . and yet, of this I doubt. . . .
 Believe, that I sufficiently esteem him;
 And that no other man in all the world,
 If he have not, shall ever have my hand.
 I hope that Pereus, as he ought to be,
 Will to my heart be dear; by living with him
 In constant and inseparable faith,
 I hope that he will make both peace and joy
 Return to me again: that life may be
 Still dear to me, and peradventure happy.
 Ah! if I hitherto have loved him not
 As he deserves, 'tis not a fault of mine,
 But rather of my state; which makes me first
 Abhor myself. . . . Him have I chosen once:

And now, again I choose him: long for him,
Solicit him, and him alone. My choice
Beyond expression to yourselves was grateful:
Be then, as ye did wish, as now I wish,
The whole accomplish'd. Since I show myself
Superior to my grief, do ye so likewise.
As joyfully as may be, soon will I
Come to the nuptials: ye will find yourselves
Some day made happy by them.

Ce.— O rare daughter!
How many true perfections thou unitest!

Cin.—Thy words a little calm me; but I tremble. . . .

My.—I feel, while thus in conference with you,
My strength return. I may again perchance
Wholly become the mistress of myself
(If the gods will), provided ye will lend
Me your assistance.

Cin.— What assistance?

Ce.— Speak!
We will do ev'rything.

My.— I am constrain'd
Once more to grieve you. Hear.—To my worn breast,
And to my troubled, weak, distemper'd mind,
The sight of objects new to me will prove
A potent remedy; and this will be
Effectual in proportion as 'tis speedy.
What it will cost me to abandon you
(O Heav'ns!), I cannot say; my tears will tell it,
When I bid you the terrible farewell:
If, without falling lifeless, . . . in thy arms,
I can, O mother, do it. . . . But, if yet
I can abandon you, the day will come,
When, to this gen'rous effort, I shall owe
Life, peace, and happiness.

Ce.— Dost thou thus speak
Of leaving us? Wouldst do it instantly?
At once dost fear and wish to do it? Whence
Such inconsistency? . . .

Cin.—

Abandon us? . . .

And what remains to us, if left of thee?
Thou mayst at leisure afterwards depart
To Pereus' father; but meanwhile ere this
With us enjoy protracted happiness. . . .

My.—If here I cannot possibly be happy,

Would ye prefer to see me dead in Cyprus,
Or know me happy on a foreign shore?—
Sooner or later, to Epirus' realm
My destiny invites me: there should I
With Pereus finally abide. To you,
When Pereus his paternal sceptre sways,
One day will we return. Ye shall again
In Cyprus see me, if the gods so grant,
The joyful mother of a num'rous offspring:
And we will leave to you, of all my children,
The one ye may love best, to be the prop
Of your declining years. Thus of your blood
Shall ye possess an heir to this rich realm;
Since offspring of the stronger sex, the gods
Have hitherto denied to you. Then ye,
The day on which ye suffer'd me to go,
Will be the first to hail with blessings.—Ah,
Grant that to-morrow Pereus may with me
Spread to the wind our sails. Within my heart
I feel a certain and tremendous presage,
That I, if ye prohibit my departure,
Alas! within this inauspicious palace,
To-day the hapless victim will remain
Of an inscrutable and unknown power:
That ye will lose me everlastingly. . . .
Do ye, I pray, compassionately yield
To my unhappy presage; or be pleased,
Indulging my distemper'd phantasy,
To second what perchance you deem an error.
My life, my destiny, and also (Heav'ns!
I shudder as I speak) your destiny,
All, all, too much depend on my departure.

Ce.—O daughter! . . .

Cin.— Ah! . . . Thy accents make us tremble. . . .

But yet, if such thy will, so be it done.
 Whate'er may be my grief, I would prefer
 Never to see thee, than to see thee thus.—
 And thou, sweet consort, standest motionless,
 In tears? . . . Consentest thou to her desire?

Ce.—Ah! could her absence kill me, as (alas!)
 I feel assured that I shall hence be doom'd
 In tears to live disconsolate forever! . . .
 Ah! might the augury prove one day true,
 Which she suggested of her precious offspring! . . .
 But yet, since such is her fantastic wish,
 So that she lives, let it be gratified.

My.—Belovèd mother, now thou givest me
 Life for the second time. Within an hour
 Shall I be ready for the nuptial rites.
 Whether I love you, time will prove to you;
 Though now I seem impatient to forsake you.—
 Now, for a little while, do I retire
 To my apartments: fain would I appear
 With tearless eyes before the altar; meeting
 My noble spouse with brow serene, and cheerful.

SCENE III.

Cinyras, Cecris.

Cecris.—Unhappy parents we! unhappy daughter! . . .

Cinyras.—Yet, to behold her ev'ry day more sad,
 My heart hath not the firmness. 'Twere in vain
 To be opposed. . . .

Ce.— O spouse! . . . A thousand fears
 Invade my heart, lest her excess of grief,
 When she is parted from us, should destroy her.

Cin.—From her expressions, from her looks and gestures,
 And also from her sighs, it seems to me
 That by some superhuman agency
 She's fearfully possess'd.

Ce.— . . . Ah! well I know,
 Implacable, vindictive Venus, well,
 Thy rigorous revenge. Thus dost thou make me
 Atone for my irrev'rent arrogance.
 But innocent my daughter was; I only
 Was the delinquent; I alone the culprit. . . .

Cin.—O Heav'ns! what hast thou dared against the goddess?

Ce.—Unhappy I! . . . Hear, Cinyras, my fault.—
 When I beheld myself the spouse adored
 Of one who was so loving as a husband,
 A man for captivating grace unequal'd,
 And by him mother of an only daughter
 (For beauty, modesty, and sense, and grace
 Throughout the world unrivall'd), I confess,
 Intoxicated with my happy lot,
 I dared deny to Venus, I alone,
 Her tributary incense. Wouldst thou more?
 Insensate, and extravagant, at last
 To such a pitch (alas, how ill-advised!)
 Of madness I arrived, that from my lips
 I suffer'd the imprudent boast to fall,
 That by the wondrous, celebrated beauty
 Of Myrrha, now more votaries were drawn
 From Asia and from Greece, than heretofore
 Were e'er attracted to her sacred isle,
 By warm devotion to the Cyprian queen.

Cin.—O! what is this thou say'st? . . .

Ce.— Lo, from that day
 Henceforward, Myrrha lost her peace; her life,
 Her beauty, like frail wax before the fire,
 Slowly consumed; and nothing in our hands
 From that time seem'd to prosper. Afterwards
 What did I not attempt to soothe the goddess?
 What prayers, what tears, what penitential rites
 Have I not lavish'd? evermore in vain.

Cin.—Ill hast thou done, O woman; and still worse
 Hath been thy guilt, in keeping it from me.
 A father wholly innocent, perchance
 I might, by means of mediatorial rites,

The pardon of the goddess have obtain'd:
 And yet perchance (I hope) I may succeed.—
 But meanwhile, now indeed do I concur
 In Myrrha's judgment: that we must perforce,
 And with what promptitude we can effect it,
 Remove her from this consecrated isle.
 Who knows? perchance the anger of the goddess
 Will not to other climes pursue her: hence
 Our wretched daughter, feeling in her breast
 Such strange forebodings, yearns perchance so deeply
 For her departure, on it founds such hopes.—
 But Pereus comes: he's welcome: he alone,
 By taking her away from us, can now
 For us our daughter save.

Ce.—

O destiny!

SCENE IV.

Cinyras, Pereus, Cecris.

Pereus.—Tardy, irresolute, and apprehensive,
 And full of mortal wretchedness, ye see me.
 A bitter conflict lacerates my heart:
 I have, by pity and a genuine love
 Of others, not of self, been conquer'd. This
 Will cost my life. No otherwise this grieves me,
 Than that I thus have forfeited the power
 To spend it in your service: but I will not,
 No, I will never drag to hopeless death
 My dearest Myrrha. The disastrous tie
 Shall now be torn asunder; and, with that,
 The thread of my existence.

Cinyras.—

O my son! . . .

Still by this name I call thee; and I hope
 That thou ere long wilt be my son indeed.
 We, since thyself, have heard explicitly
 The secret thoughts of Myrrha: I have taken,
 As a true father, ev'ry means with her,
 So that she now, with absolute free will,

Her own unbiass'd judgment may pursue.
 But 'mid the winds the rock is not so firm,
 As she is firm to thee: thee, thee, alone
 She wills, and she solicits; and she fears
 Lest thou be taken from her. She knows not
 Herself how to adduce to us a cause
 For her despondency: her health infirm,
 Which was the first effect of this, perchance
 Is now its only cause. But her deep grief
 Deserves much pity, be it what it may;
 Nor should she wake in thee, more than in us,
 Any dissatisfaction. A sweet solace
 Thou of her ills wilt be: on thy firm love
 Her hopes are founded all. What stronger proof
 Wouldst thou require than this? she will herself
 At ev'ry risk abandon us to-morrow
 (Us, who so dearly love her!); and for this,
 The reason given is to be with thee
 More absolutely, to become more thine.

Pe.—Ah, could I trust to this! but specially
 This her abrupt departure. . . . Ah, I tremble,
 Lest she in thought designs the instrument
 To make me of her death.

Cecris.— To thee, O Pereus,
 Do we confide her: fate to-day decrees it.
 Too certainly, before our very eyes,
 Here would she lifeless fall, if to her will
 Our hearts permitted us to persevere
 In opposition. Change of place and scene
 Potently operates on youthful minds.
 Then lay aside all inauspicious thoughts;
 And think alone of making her more happy.
 Bring to thy countenance its wonted joy;
 And, by avoiding mention of her grief,
 Soon wilt thou see that grief itself subside.

Pe.—May I believe, then, certainly believe,
 That Myrrha hates me not?

Cin.— From me thou mayst
 Believe it, yes! What heretofore I said,

Remember; by her words I'm now convinced,
 That, far from being cause of her distress,
 She deems these nuptials her sole remedy.
 She must be treated with indulgence; thus
 She will submit to anything. Go thou;
 Quickly prepare thyself for festive pomp;
 And at the same time ev'rything dispose,
 For taking from us by to-morrow's dawn
 Our much-loved daughter. We will not assemble
 Before the altar of the public temple,
 In sight of all the dwellers here in Cyprus;
 For the long rite would be an obstacle
 To such a quick departure. We will chant
 The hymeneal anthems in this palace.

Pe.—Thou hast restored me suddenly to life.
 I fly; and here will instantly return.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Eurycleia, Myrrha.

Myrrha.—Dear *Eurycleia*, yes: thou seest me
 Completely tranquilized; and almost joyous,
 At my resolved departure.

Eurycleia.— Can this be? . . .
 Alone with *Pereus* wilt thou hence depart? . . .
 Nor, of so many of thy faithful handmaids,
 Wilt thou select e'en one? Not even me
 Wilt thou distinguish from this wide neglect? . . .
 What will become of me, my dearest child,
 If thou abandon me? alas! I feel
 Ready to die at the mere thought of this. . . .

My.—Ah! hold thy peace. . . . One day I shall return. . . .

Eu.—Ah! may the Heav'ns grant this! Belovèd daughter! . . .
 I did not think that thou wert capable
 Of such a stern resolve: I always hoped
 That thou at last would close my dying eyes. . . .

My.—I should have chosen thee, and thee alone,
 If I, by any means, could have resolved

To take an inmate of this palace with me. . . .

But on this point am I inflexible. . . .

Eu.—And at to-morrow's dawn thou go'st from hence? . . .

My.—I from my parents have at length obtain'd

Permission to do this; the rising sun

Will see our vessel wafted from this shore.

Eu.—Auspicious be the day to thee! . . . Could I

Know thou wert only happy! . . . 'Tis, in truth,

A cruel and a mortifying joy,

That thou dost manifest in leaving us. . . .

Yet, if it please thee, I will weep, though mute,

With thy afflicted mother. . . .

My.—

Wherefore thus

My heart already too assailable

Dost thou assail? . . . Why force me thus to weep? . . .

Eu.—And how can I suppress my bursting tears? . . .

This is the last time that I shall behold,

And shall embrace thee. Thou forsakest me,

With many years bow'd down, and still more bow'd

With wretchedness. I shall be in my grave

At thy return, if that should ever be:

Some tears, I hope that . . . thou at least wilt give . . .

To the remembrance . . . of thy Eurycleia. . . .

My.—For pity's sake . . . O! quit me; or at least

Be silent.—I command thee; hold thy peace.

It is my duty now to be to all

Inflexible; and chiefly to myself.—

This is a day to nuptial joy devoted.

Now, if thou e'er hast loved me, I require

Of thee to-day the last hard proof of this;

Restrain thy tears, . . . and mine.—I see already

My spouse approaching. Let all grief be mute.

SCENE II.

Pereus, Myrrha, Eurycleia.

Pereus.—Thy father, Myrrha, hath transported me

With unexpected joy: my destiny,

Which I expected trembling, he himself
 Hath cheerfully announced to me as happy.
 Since thou wilt have it so, to-morrow's dawn,
 At thy command, shall see my sails unfurl'd.
 At least I'm pleased that both thy parents yield
 Contentedly and placidly to this:
 For me no other pleasure can there be,
 Save that of satisfying thy desires.

Myrrha.—Yes, much-loved spouse; for by this tender name

Already I accost thee; if a wish
 My bosom ever fervently inspired,
 I am all-burning at the break of day
 To go from hence, in company with thee,
 And so I will. To find myself at once
 With thee alone; no longer to behold
 Display'd before my sight the many objects
 So long the witnesses, perchance the cause,
 Of my distress; to sail in unknown seas;
 To land in countries hitherto unseen;
 To breathe a fresh invigorating air;
 And evermore to witness at my side,
 Beaming with exultation, and with love,
 A spouse like thee; all this, I am convinced,
 Will in a short time make me once again
 Such as I used to be. Less irksome then
 I trust that I shall be to thee. Meanwhile,
 My state will stand in need of some indulgence;
 But, be assured that this will not last long.
 My grief, if never to my mind recall'd,
 Will be eradicated soon. Do thou,
 Of my abandon'd and paternal realm,
 Of my disconsolate and childless parents,
 In short, of nothing, that was once my own,
 Once precious to my heart, remind me ever,
 Nor even breathe to me their thrilling names.
 This, this will be the only remedy
 That will forever staunch the bitter fount
 Of my all-fearful, never-ceasing tears.

Pe.—Strange and unparallel'd is thy design,
 O Myrrha: ah, may Heav'n in mercy grant

That thou mayst not, when 'tis too late, repent it!—
 Yet, though my heart the flatt'ring thought admits not
 Of being dear to thee, I am resolved
 Blindly to execute each wish of thine.
 Provided that my destiny decrees
 That I should ne'er be worthy of thy love,
 My life, which only for thy sake I keep
 (That life which I had sacrificed already
 With my own hand, if I had been to-day
 Forced to relinquish thee), this life of mine,
 Since for this sacred purpose thou hast deign'd
 To make a choice of me, I consecrate
 Forever to thy grief. To weep with thee,
 If thou shouldst wish it; with festivity,
 And mirthful sports, to make the time pass by
 With lighter wings, and cheat thee of thy cares;
 With care unceasing, to anticipate
 All thy desires; to show myself at all times,
 Whichever most thou wishest me to be,
 Thy husband, lover, brother, friend, or servant;
 Behold, to what I pledge myself: in this,
 And this alone, my glory and my life
 Will all be centred. Yet, by this unmoved,
 If thou canst never love me, still, methinks,
 I cannot be the object of thy hate.

My.—What say'st thou? Learn, ah! better learn to know,
 Better to value Myrrha and thyself.
 To thy so numerous endowments, thou
 Addest such boundless love, that thou deservest
 A far, far diff'rent object to myself.
 Love in my bosom will enshrine his fires,
 When he has clear'd it of its blighting tears.
 An ample and indubitable proof
 Of this, thou'lt find, in seeing that to-day
 I choose thee as the healer of my woes;
 That I esteem thee, that with lofty voice
 I hail thee as my only true deliv'rer.

Pe.—Thou dost inflame me with excessive joy:
 Never till now did accents sweet as these
 Flow from thy beauteous lips: within my heart

Engraved in characters of fire they live.—
Behold, the priests, and all the festal train,
And our dear parents, hither come. My spouse,
Ah! may this moment be to thee propitious,
As it is now the brightest of my life!

SCENE III.

Priests, Chorus of Children, Maidens, and old Men; Cinyras,
Cecris, People, Myrrha, Pereus, Eurycleia.

Cinyras.—Belovèd children, I infer, at least,
A joyful augury from seeing you
Going before us to the sacred rite.
On thy face, Pereus, transport is express'd;
And I behold my daughter's countenance
Serene and resolute. The deities
With looks benign assuredly regard us.—
With copious incense be the altars heap'd;
Peal forth the song, to make the gods propitious;
And let your grateful and devoted hymns
In sounding accents echo to the skies.

Chorus.—Hymen, benignant deity, of Love
The brother, of frail man the soothing friend;
On us propitiously do thou descend;
And bid henceforth these happy votaries prove
A flame so pure from thy inspiring breath,
That nothing may extinguish it, but death.—

Children.—Come to us, Hymen, with triumphant joy;
Borne on thy brother's wings, descend below;

Maidens.—With his own craft deceive the treach'rous boy,
Rob him of darts, of quiver, and of bow.

Old Men.—But do thou come exempt from all his arts,
His soft caprices, and insidious sighs:

Chorus.—And deign, O Hymen, to unite two hearts,
In mutual love unmatch'd, with thy firm ties.

Eurycleia.—Daughter, what ails thee? dost thou tremble? . . .
Heav'ns! . . .

Myrrha.—Peace. . . peace . . .

Eu.—

But yet—

My.—

No, no; I do not tremble.—

Chorus.—Mother sublime of Hymen, and of Love,

A goddess e'en among the gods art thou;

Whose high supremacy in heav'n above,

Or in the earth, none dare to disavow;

From old Olympus' heights, O Venus, deign

Upon this pair propitiously to smile;

If e'er the rites of this thy sacred isle

Thy kind protection haply might obtain.

Children.—Those peerless charms from thee derive their birth,

Bestow'd on Myrrha with such lavish wealth;

Maidens.—Restoring her once more to joy and health,

Be pleased to leave thy image on the earth;

Old Men.—Lastly, make her the mother of a race

So noble, that their father may confess,

Grandsires, and subjects, that past wretchedness

Is all forgotten in their matchless grace.—

Chorus.—Benignant goddess, gloriously unfold,

From the pure azure of the heav'nly height,

Drawn by thy swans with plumes of downy white,

Throned in thy chariot of translucent gold,

Thy form majestical; and by thy side

Have thy two sons; thy rosy veil so fair,

As at thy shrine they kneel, cast o'er this pair,

And let two bodies one sole spirit hide.

Cecris.—Yes, daughter, yes; with meek subserviency

Thou always soughtest to secure the favor

Of our all-pow'rful goddess. . . . But, alas! . . .

Thy count'nance changes? . . . Thou art faint, and trem-
bling? . . .

And scarce thy falt'ring knees—

My.—

For pity's sake,

Do not, O mother, with thy accents bring

My constancy to too severe a test:

I cannot answer for my countenance; . . .

But this I know, the purpose of my heart

Is steady and immutable.

Eu.—

I feel

As if, for her, I were about to die.

Pereus.—Ah! more and more her countenance is troubled? . . .

O what a tremor now assaults my frame!—

Chorus.—Pure Faith, and Concord, lasting and divine,

Have placed in this fond couple's breast their shrine;

And fell Alecto, and her sisters dread,

In vain their torches' lurid glare would shed

On the brave bosom of the bride so fair,

Whose praises all our pow'r exceed:

While deadly Discord, frantic with despair,

Upon himself in vain doth feed. . . .

My.—What is it that ye say? My heart already

By all the baneful Furies is assail'd.

See them; the rabid sisters round me glare

With sable torches, and with snaky scourge:

Behold the torches, which these nuptials merit. . . .

Cin.—O Heav'ns! what do I hear?*Ce.*—

My child, thou ravest. . . .

Pe.—O fatal rites! ye ne'er shall be perform'd. . . .*My.*—But what? the hymns have ceased? . . . Who to his breast

Thus clasps me? Where am I? What have I said?

Am I a spouse already? . . .

Pe.—

Thou art not,

Myrrha, espoused; nor shalt thou ever be

The spouse of Pereus: this I swear to thee.

Not less intense, but different to thine,

The execrable Furies tear my heart.

Thou hast made me a fable to the world;

And to myself, e'en more than I'm to thee,

An object of abhorrence: I for this

Will not make thee unhappy. Thou hast now,

Though 'gainst thy will, in full betray'd thyself:

And thou hast finally beyond all doubt

Proved the invincible and long aversion,

Which thou hast cherish'd tow'rds me. Both are happy,

That thou hast thus betray'd thyself in time!

Now from the self-imposed and hated yoke

Art thou released forever. Safe art thou,
 And from all ties exempt. Henceforth will I
 Remove forever from thy troubled sight
 My odious presence. . . . Satisfied, and happy,
 I'll make thee now. . . . Ere long shalt thou be told
 What was the last resource of him who lost thee.

SCENE IV.

Cinyras, Myrrha, Cecris, Eurycleia, Priests, Chorus, People.

Cinyras.—The rite is now profaned; hence, hence this pomp,
 This ineffectual pomp; let all hymns cease.
 Meanwhile, O priests, withdraw elsewhere. I fain
 (Unhappy sire!) would weep at least unseen.

SCENE V.

Cinyras, Myrrha, Cecris, Eurycleia.

Eurycleia.—Ah! far more dead than living, Myrrha stands:
 See ye that I can scarce support her form?
 O daughter! . . .

Cinyras.— Women, leave her to herself
 A prey, and to her own flagitious Furies.
 She, with her unexampled waywardness,
 Spite of myself, at last hath render'd me
 Inflexible and cruel: for her state
 No more I feel compassion. She herself,
 Almost against the wishes of her parents,
 Would to the altar come: and this alone
 To shame us with her own disgrace and ours? . . .
 Thou too compassionate, deluded mother,
 Leave her: if hitherto we were not stern,
 The day at length is come to be so.

Myrrha.— Yes:
 'Tis as it should be: Cinyras, be thou
 With me inexorable; for naught else

I wish; naught else I will. He, he alone
 Can terminate the bitter martyrdom
 Of an unhappy and unworthy daughter.—
 Plunge thou within my breast that vengeful sword,
 Which now is hanging idly by thy side:
 Thou gavest me this wretched, hateful life;
 Take thou it from me: lo! the last, last gift
 For which I supplicate thee. . . . Ah, reflect,
 If thou thyself, and with thy own right hand,
 Dost not destroy me, thou reservest me
 To perish by my own, and for naught else.

Cin.—O daughter! . . .

Cecris.— O sad words! . . . O speechless anguish! . . .
 Ah! thou'rt a father; thou a father art; . . .
 Wherefore exasperate her? . . . Is she not
 Sufficiently afflicted? . . . Thou see'st clearly
 That she is scarce the mistress of herself;
 Her reason sinks beneath her mighty anguish. . . .

Eu.—O Myrrha, . . . daughter, . . . dost thou hear me not? . . .
 My tears, . . . prevent . . . my utterance . . .

Cin.— O state! . . .
 By such a dreadful sight I am o'ercome . . .
 Ah! yes, I am e'en yet too much a father;
 And of all fathers most unfortunate. . . .
 Already by compassion, more than rage,
 Am I possess'd. I will betake myself
 Elsewhere to weep. Watch over her, meanwhile.—
 As soon as she shall have regain'd her reason,
 She must prepare to hear her father speak.

SCENE VI.

Cecris, Myrrha, Eurycleia.

Eurycleia.—Ah see, once more her senses she resumes. . . .

Cecris.—Leave me alone with her, good Eurycleia;
 I would speak to her.

SCENE VII.

Cecris, Myrrha.

Myrrha.— Has my father gone? . . .

He, then, he will not kill me? . . . Ah, do thou
In pity, mother, give to me a sword;
Ah, yes; if there indeed remains in thee
The shadow of thy love for me, a sword
Give me thyself, without delay. I am
In full possession of my faculties;
And well I know the mighty consequence
Of this my fervent prayer: ah, trust for once
My judgment; trust it while there yet is time:
Thou wilt repent hereafter, but in vain,
If thou to-day dost grant me not a sword.

Cecris.—Belovèd child, . . . O Heav'ns! . . . assuredly
From grief thou ravest. From thy mother thou
Wouldst never ask a sword. . . . Now let us speak
No more of nuptial rites: a strength of mind,
Not to be parallel'd, hath led thee on
To execute thy promise; but, in truth,
Stronger than self was nature: fervently
For this I thank the gods. Thou shalt be ever
Clasp'd in the arms of thy indulgent mother:
And if to endless tears thou'rt self-condemn'd,
I will weep also evermore with thee,
Nor ever, even for an instant, leave thee:
We will be one in all things; e'en thy grief,
Since it will not abandon thee, will I
Appropriate to myself. And thou shalt find
In me a sister, rather than a mother. . . .
But what, O Heav'ns, is this? . . . Belovèd child, . . .
Art thou incensed against me? . . . repell'est me? . . .
Refusest to embrace me? and dost dart
Indignant and exasperated looks? . . .
Alas! O daughter, . . . e'en towards thy mother? . . .

My.—Ah! too much it increases my despair,
Even the seeing thee: thou, more and more,

Rendest my heart when thou embracest me. . . .
 Alas! . . . what do I say? . . . Belovèd mother! . . .
 A vile, ungrateful, and unworthy daughter
 Am I, who love deserve not. Leave thou me
 To my dire destiny; . . . or if thou feel
 For me true pity, I repeat it to thee,
 Kill me.

Ce.— Ah, rather should I kill myself,
 If I were doom'd to lose thee: cruel one!
 Canst thou speak to me, and repeat to me
 So horrible a wish?—I rather will
 From this hour forth perpetually watch
 Over thy life.

My.— Thou, thou watch o'er my life?
 Must I, at ev'ry instant, I, behold thee?
 Thee evermore before my eyes? Ah, first
 I will that these same eyes of mine be closed
 In everlasting darkness: I myself
 With these my very hands would pluck them first
 From my own face. . . .

Ce.— O Heav'ns! What hear I? . . .
 Heav'ns! . . .
 Thou mak'st me shudder. Then thou hatest me? . . .

My.—Thou first, thou sole, eternal, fatal cause
 Of all my wretchedness—

Ce.— What words are these? . . .
 O daughter! . . . I the cause? . . . But, see, thy tears
 Gush forth in torrents. . . .

My.— Pardon, pardon me! . . .
 It is not I that speak; an unknown power
 Rules my distemper'd organs. . . . Dearest mother!
 Too much thou lovest me; and I—

Ce.— Dost thou
 Deem me the cause? . . .

My.— Yes, thou, alas! hast been,
 In giving life to such an impious wretch,
 The cause of all my woes: and art so still,
 If thou refuseth now to take it from me;
 Now that I importune thee for this deed

So fervently. There yet is time for this;
 Still am I innocent, almost. . . . But, O! . . .
 Against such agonies . . . my . . . languid . . . frame . . .
 No more bears up. . . . My strength, . . . my senses fail
 me. . . .

Ce.—To thy apartments suffer me to lead thee.
 Thou need'st some cordial to restore thy strength;
 This transient frenzy, trust me, hath arisen
 From too long fasting. Ah, come thou; in me
 Fully confide: I, I alone will serve thee.

ACT V. SCENE I.

Cinyras.

Cinyras.—O ill-starr'd, wretched Pereus! Too true lover! . . .
 Ah, had I been more swift in my arrival,
 Thou hadst not then perchance within thy breast
 The fatal weapon buried.—O great Heav'ns!
 What will his poor bereavèd father say?
 Espoused and joyful he expected him;
 Now will he see him brought before his eyes,
 By his own hands destroy'd, a lifeless corpse.—
 But I, alas! am I then less than he
 Despairing as a father? Is this life,
 The state in which, amid atrocious furies,
 The frantic Myrrha pines? and is this life,
 To which we're doom'd by her mysterious pangs?—
 But I will question her; and I have arm'd
 My heart in iron mail. She well deserves
 (And this she knows) my anger; as a proof,
 She tardily obeys my summons hither:
 Yet, my command hath she already heard
 By the third messenger.—Assuredly
 Beneath these pangs of hers there is conceal'd
 Some secret no less dreadful than important.
 I, from her lips, will now hear all the truth,
 Or never, never more will I henceforth
 Admit her to my presence. . . . But (O Heav'ns!),

If she's condemn'd to everlasting tears,
 Though innocent, by force of destiny,
 And by the anger of offended gods,
 Should I to such calamities as these
 Add the displeasure of a father? Should I,
 Despairing, and despised, abandon her
 To ling'ring death? . . . Alas! at such a thought
 My heart doth break. . . . But, yet, in part, at least,
 'Tis indispensable that I should hide,
 From her, in this my last experiment,
 My boundless fondness. Never hath she yet
 Heard me address her in reproachful terms:
 No maiden surely hath a heart so firm,
 As may suffice to hear without emotion
 The unaccustom'd menace of a father.—
 At length she comes.—Alas, how she approaches
 With tardy and reluctant steps! It seems
 As if she came to die before my eyes.

SCENE II.

Cinyras, Myrrha.

Cinyras.—Myrrha, I never, never could have thought
 That thou regardedst not thy father's honor;
 Thou hast too certainly of this convinced me
 On this day fatal to us all: but yet,
 That thou shouldst now reluctantly obey
 Thy sire's express and oft-repeated summons,
 E'en this was less expected than the other.

Myrrha.—. . . Thou of my life art arbiter supreme. . . .
 I did implore from thee . . . myself, . . . erewhile, . . .
 And on this very spot, . . . the punishment . . .
 Of my so many, . . . and enormous faults. . . .
 My mother, too, was present; . . . wherefore then . . .
 Didst thou not kill me? . . .

Cin.— It is time, O Myrrha,
 Yes, it is time to alter thy deportment.
 In vain thou usest accents of despair;

In vain despairing and confounded looks
 Thou fixest on the ground. Through all thy grief,
 Alas, too evidently shame appears;
 Guilty thou feel'st thyself. Thy heaviest fault,
 Is thy concealment with thy father: hence
 His anger thoroughly thou meritest;
 And that the partial and indulgent love
 I bore to thee, my dear and only daughter,
 Henceforth should cease.—But what? thy tears gush
 forth?
 Thou tremblest? shudderest? . . . and thou art silent?—
 Would, then, thy father's anger be to thee
 An insupportable infliction?

My.— Ah! . . .
 Worse . . . than the worst of deaths. . . .

Cin.— Hear me.—Thou hast
 Render'd thy parents, as thou hast thyself,
 A fable to the world, by the sad end
 Which thou hast given to thy nuptial rites.
 Thy cruel outrage has cut short already
 The days of wretched Pereus. . . .

My.— Heav'ns! what hear I?

Cin.—Yes, dead is Pereus; and 'tis thou hast slain him.
 Soon as he left our presence, he withdrew,
 Alone, and by mute anguish overwhelm'd,
 To his apartments: no man durst pursue him.
 Too late, alas! I came. . . . He lay, transfix'd
 By his own dagger, in a sea of blood:
 To me, his eyes bedimm'd with tears, and death,
 He raised; . . . and, 'mid his latest sighs, he breathed
 The name of Myrrha from his lips.—Ungrateful . . .

My.—Ah, say no more to me. . . . I, I alone
 Deserve to breathe my last. . . . And yet I live?

Cin.—The horrid anguish of the wretched father
 Of Pereus, I alone can comprehend,
 I, who at once am wretched and a father:
 Hence, I'm aware what now must be his rage,
 His hatred, and his thirst to wreak on us
 A just and bitter vengeance.—Hence, not moved

By terror of his arms, but by a just
 Compassion for his son, I am resolved
 To know from thee, as doth befit a father
 Offended and deceived (and at all risks
 Do I insist on this), the real cause
 Of such a horrible catastrophe.—
 Myrrha, in vain wouldst thou conceal it from me:
 Thou by thy each least gesture art betray'd.—
 Thy broken words; the changes of thy face,
 Now dyed with scarlet, and with hues of death
 Now blanch'd; thy mute and bosom-heaving sighs;
 The ling'ring hectic that consumes thy frame;
 Thy restless glances, indirect and stolen;
 Thy dumb confusion; and the cleaving shame,
 And blushing consciousness that ne'er forsakes thee: . . .
 Ah! all that I behold in thee persuades me,
 And ineffectual thy denial is, . . .
 That these thy furies all . . . love's children are.

My.—I? . . . love's? . . . Ah, think it not! . . . Thou art deceived.

Cin.—The more that thou deniest it, the more
 Am I convinced of this. And I, alas!
 Am but too well assured, that this thy flame,
 Which thou so pertinaciously dost hide,
 To some degrading object owes its birth.

My.—Alas! . . . what art thou thinking? . . . Thou wilt not
 Destroy me with thy sword; . . . and thou meanwhile . . .
 Destroyest me with words. . . .

Cin.— And dardest thou
 Assert to me that thou'rt untouch'd by love?
 And shouldst thou tell me so, and even dare
 Also to swear it, I should deem thee perjured.—
 But who is ever worthy of thy heart,
 If Pereus, true, incomparable lover,
 Could not indeed obtain it?—But so fierce
 Are thy emotions; . . . such thy agitation;
 So conscious and so passionate thy shame;
 And in such terrible vicissitudes
 The conflict of these passions is engraved

Upon thy countenance, that all in vain
Thy lips deny the charge. . . .

My.— Ah, wouldst thou then . . .
E'en in thy presence . . . make me . . . die . . . of
shame? . . .
And thou a father?

Cin.— And wouldst thou with cruel,
Inflexible, and unavailing silence,
Poison, and prematurely terminate
The days of a fond father who doth love thee
Far better than himself?—I'm yet a father:
Banish thy fear; whatever be thy flame
(So that I once might see thee happy), I,
If thou confess it to me, for thy sake,
Am capable of any sacrifice.
I saw, and still I see (unhappy daughter!)
The struggle generous and horrible,
Which tears thy heart to pieces betwixt love
And duty. Thou hast done too much already,
To sense of right self-sacrificed: but love,
More pow'rful than thyself, forbids the off'ring.
Passion may be excused; its impulses
Oft foil our best endeavors to resist them;
But to withhold thy secret from thy father,
Who prays for, who commands, thy confidence,
Admits of no excuse.

My.— O death, O death,
Whom I so much invoke, wilt thou still be
Deaf to my grief? . . .

Cin.— Ah, daughter, try to calm,
Ah, try to calm thy heart: if thou wilt not
Make me hereafter more incensed against thee,
I am already almost pacified;
Provided thou wilt speak to me. Ah, speak
To me, as to a brother. Even I
Love by experience know: the name—

My.— O Heav'ns! . . .
I love, yes; since thou forcest me to say it;
I desperately love, and love in vain.

But, who's the object of that hopeless passion,
 Nor thou, nor any one, shalt ever know:
 He knows it not himself . . . and even I
 Almost deny it to myself.

Cin.—

And I

Both will, and ought to know it. Nor canst thou
 Be cruel to thyself, except thou be
 At the same time still more so to thy parents,
 Who thee adore, thee only. Speak, ah, speak!—
 Thou see'st already, from an angry father,
 That I become a weeping suppliant:
 Thou canst not die, without condemning us
 To share thy tomb.—He, whose'er he be,
 Whom thou dost love, I will that he be thine.
 The monarch's foolish pride can never tear
 The true love of a father from my breast.
 Thy love, thy hand, my realm, may well convert
 The lowest individual to a rank
 Lofty and noble: and I feel assured
 That he whom thou couldst love, could never be
 Wholly unworthy, though of humble birth.
 I do conjure thee, speak: whate'er the cost,
 I wish thee saved.

My.—

Me saved? . . . What drest thou? . . .

These very words accelerate my death. . . .
 Let me, for pity's sake, ah, let me quickly
 Forever . . . drag myself . . . from thee. . . .

Cin.—

O daughter,

Sole, and belovèd; O, what say'st thou? Ah!
 Come to thy father's arms.—O Heav'ns! like one
 Distract, and frantic, thou repellst me?
 Thou then dost hate thy father? and dost thou
 Burn with so vile a passion that thou fearest . . .

My.—Ah no, it is not vile; . . . my flame is guilty;
 Nor ever . . .

Cin.—

What is this thou sayest? Guilty,

Provided that thy sire condemn it not,
 It cannot be: reveal it.

My.—

Thou wouldst see

Even that sire himself with horror shudder,
If it should reach the ears of . . . Cinyras . . .

Cin.—What do I hear!

My.—What have I said? . . . alas! . . .

I know not what I say: . . . I do not love. . . .

Ah, think it not; O no! . . . Ah, suffer me,

I for the last time fervently conjure thee,

To hasten from thy presence.

Cin.— Thankless one:

Now, by exasperating thus my rage

With thy fantastic moods, by trifling thus

With my excessive grief, eternally

Now hast thou forfeited thy father's love.

My.—O cruel, bitter, and ferocious menace! . . .

Now, in the anguish of my dying gasp,

Swiftly approaching, . . . to my pangs so dire,

So various, and so fierce, will now be added

The cruel execration of my father? . . .

Shall it be mine to die, removed from thee? . . .

O happy is my mother! . . . she, at least.

Press'd in thy arms . . . may breathe . . . her latest
sigh. . . .

Cin.—What wouldst thou say to me? . . . What dreadful light.

Breaks from these words! . . . Thou, impious one, perchance? . . .

My.—O Heav'ns! what have I said indeed? . . . Alas!

Unhappy I! . . . Where am I? . . . Whither now

Shall I betake myself? . . . Where shall I die?—

But now thy dagger may befriend me. . . .

Cin.— Daughter! . . .

What hast thou done? my dagger . . .

My.— Lo! . . . to thee . . .

I now restore it. . . . I at least possess'd

A hand as swift and desp'rate as my tongue.

Cin.— . . . I'm petrified . . . with fear . . . and agony.

With pity, . . . and with rage.

My.— O Cinyras! . . .

Thou . . . see'st me . . . now . . . expiring . . . in thy
presence, . . .

I have . . . at once . . . both known how . . . to avenge
Thee, . . . and myself . . . to punish. . . . Thou thyself,
By dint of force, from out my heart . . . didst wrest . . .
The horrid secret. . . . But, since with my life
Alone . . . it left my lips, . . . I die . . . less guilty. . . .

Cin.—O day! O crime! . . . O grief!—To whom my tears? . . .

My.—Ah, weep no more; . . . I merit not thy tears. . . .
Shun my contagious presence; . . . and conceal . . .
From Cecris . . . ever—

Cin.— Wretchedest of fathers! . . .
And doth the gaping earth not burst asunder
To swallow me alive? . . . I dare not now
Approach the dying and flagitious woman; . . .
And yet, I cannot utterly abandon
My immolated daughter. . . .

SCENE III.

Cecris, Eurycleia, Cinyras, Myrrha.

Cecris.— By the shrieks
Of death brought hither—

Cinyras.— Do not thou advance. . . .
O Heav'ns! . . .

Ce.— To my dear daughter's side. . . .

Myrrha.— O voice!

Eurycleia.—Ah, spectacle of horror! on the earth
Myrrha lies welt'ring in her blood? . . .

Ce.— My daughter? . . .

Cin.—Stop . . .

Ce.— Murder'd! . . . How? by whom? . . . I will behold
her. . . .

Cin.—Ah, stop . . . and hear with terror. . . . With my dagger
She, . . . with her own hand, has transpierced herself. . . .

Ce.—And dost thou thus desert thy daughter? . . . Ah!
I will myself . . .

Cin.— She is no more our daughter.
 With a detestable, disgraceful love
 She burn'd for . . . Cinyras. . . .

Ce.— What do I hear?—
 O crime! . . .

Cin.— Ah, come! I pray thee let us go,
 To die with agony and shame elsewhere.

Ce.—Impious . . . O daughter! . . .

Cin.— Come thou! . . .

Ce.— Hapless one! . . .
 Not once more to embrace her? . . .

SCENE IV.

Myrrha, Eurycleia.

Myrrha.— When I ask'd . . .
 It . . . of thee, . . . thou, . . . O Eurycleia, . . . then . . .
 Shouldst . . . have given . . . to my hands . . . the
 sword: . . .
 I had died . . . guiltless; . . . guilty . . . now . . . I
 die. . . .



MARIA DE PADILLA

After an original painting by P. Gervais

Spanish and Portuguese Drama

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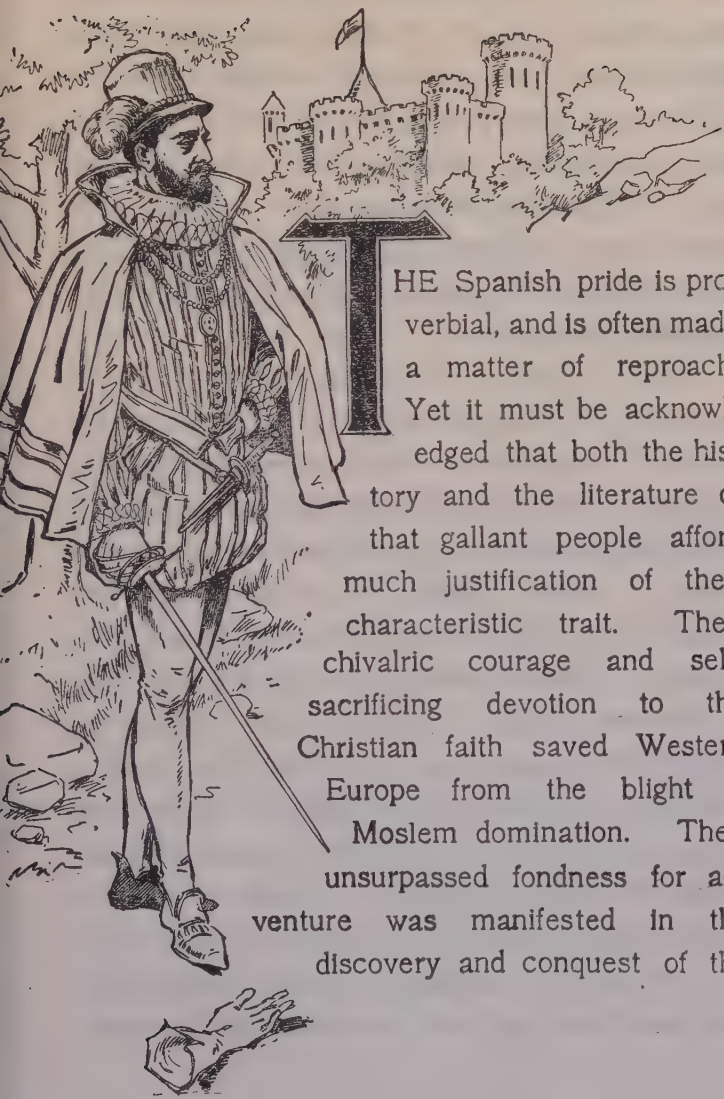
VOLUME VI

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Prologue



THE Spanish pride is proverbial, and is often made a matter of reproach. Yet it must be acknowledged that both the history and the literature of that gallant people afford much justification of their characteristic trait. Their chivalric courage and self-sacrificing devotion to the Christian faith saved Western Europe from the blight of Moslem domination. Their unsurpassed fondness for adventure was manifested in the discovery and conquest of the

PROLOGUE

New World. But when their steadfast faith degenerated into bigotry and superstition, and their pristine courage took the base form of cruelty and persecution, the Inquisition became, with their hearty consent, their typical institution. From that evil time their supremacy in world affairs began to pass away, and the proud nation sank to its present humiliating, yet not hopeless, condition.

The literature of Spain is an accurate reflection of its history and a certain index of the national character. Their mediæval ballads, beginning with those celebrating the exploits of the Christian hero, popularly known as the Cid, exhibit a grand blending of military valor with religious devotion and ardent love. In no other country did these feelings, due to the institution of chivalry, so long dominate and inspire the moral life of the people. When the glorious Renaissance pervaded all Europe, Spain rose to the zenith of her imperial greatness. But not until she had begun to decline did her literature attain a corresponding excellence.

The humble beginnings of the Spanish theatre have been graphically described by Cervantes.

PROLOGUE

and sufficient extracts from his sketch have been given in Volume IV. He had not the same success in his plays which he attained in his novels, especially in his masterpiece, *Don Quixote*; yet he undoubtedly contributed to the elevation of the national drama. But it was the genius of Lope de Vega that gave form to the Spanish drama. Although much of his life was spent in exile, in service in the Armada, and as a member of the Inquisition, yet he produced about 1500 plays, besides 300 autos sacramentales and a vast number of other literary compositions. From such of his plays as have been preserved we obtain the most vivid portraits of the Spanish people.

The prodigious success and prolific invention of Lope de Vega brought forward a host of imitators. Among the prominent writers may be pointed out Guillen de Castro, whose *Cid* became the basis of Corneille's tragedy; Tirso de Motina, who invented the character of Don Juan, which has been reproduced in every European language; F. de Roxas, who supplied scores of French dramatists with plots and scenes.

PROLOGUE

Classical scholars and the clergy protested against the ascendancy of the popular plays, but in vain. Yet they certainly found ample compensation in the works of Pedro Calderon de la Barca, the greatest glory of the Spanish drama. Strange to say, he never used blank verse, but always the national ballad metres. Though in productivity he fell far short of Lope, he surpassed him in poetic power and melodious versification. Yet Calderon's hundred plays comprise historical tragedies, comedies of manners and intrigue, allegorical contests, philosophical moralizing, besides scriptural and religious dramas.

In the seventeenth century the opera began to compete with the national drama, and other French influences prevailed at court. In the eighteenth century the Spanish court was completely dominated by France, and French fashions of all kinds were introduced. The nineteenth century witnessed a prolonged struggle between the French romantic school and the supporters of the old national drama, in which the victory rather inclined to the latter.

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Spanish Drama.

I.

Early Spanish Poetry and Romance.

Before entering upon our review of the Spanish drama, the origin of which has been briefly described in connection with the Dramatic Renaissance, it may be well to glance at the early poetry of Spain, and especially her romantic poetry, since it is on the latter that all which is best worth preserving in her dramatic literature is chiefly founded. In considering this element in Spanish literature, we should also glance at the political conditions under which it was developed.

Ancient Castile.

The Christians who, during the Moorish occupation, had preserved their independence amid the mountain fastnesses of the northern provinces, were rude and illiterate men, but high-spirited, valiant and impatient of the yoke. Each community regarded itself as a separate state, and attempted by its own strength, not only to maintain its own usages and laws, but to make

itself respected abroad. In the valleys in which they lived they had accepted as their rulers Visigoth kings, who administered justice and led the troops to battle; but they were considered rather as military leaders and protectors of the people than as masters. Every man, by defending his own liberty, became cognizant of his own rights; every man was aware of the power with which his own valor endowed him, and exacted toward himself the same respect which he paid to others. A nation composed for the greater part of emigrants, who had preferred liberty to riches, and who had abandoned their country in order that they might preserve, amid the solitude of the mountains, their religion and their laws, was not likely to recognize to any great degree the distinctions which fortune created. The son of the governor of a province might be clothed in very homely garments, and the hero by whose prowess a battle had been gained might be glad to seek repose in a hut. Thus the dignity of the people of Castile, which is observable even among beggars, and their respect for all fellow-citizens, without regard to condition in life, are peculiarities of the Spanish people which may, no doubt, be referred to this period. The forms of language and the customs of society then established became an integral part of the national manners, and have retained their ancient dignity even to the present day.

At this period civil liberty was as perfectly preserved in Spain as it can be under any form of government. The nation created kings to provide themselves with able captains, with judges of the lists, and with chieftains who might serve as models to a chivalrous nobility;

but they watched with jealousy any attempt to extend the royal prerogative. Judges were appointed, to whom the people might appeal under ordinary circumstances, and legal forms were established by which the people were authorized to resist by force abuses of power. All classes were admitted to an equal share in the representation, and every Spaniard was taught to place a due value on his privileges as a citizen. The court, the nobility and the equal balance of ranks, which suffered no one to feel degraded, preserved in the manners, the language and the literature of the Spaniards a certain elegance and a tone of courtesy and high-breeding, with something of an aristocratic character which the Italians lost very early, owing their liberties rather to a spirit of democracy.

With political liberty thus established, religious servitude could not exist, and until the time of Charles V the Spaniards maintained their independence, in a great degree, against the church of Rome, of which they became the most timid vassals when deprived of their free constitution. This religious independence has seldom been noticed, because Spanish writers of modern times have been ashamed of it, while foreigners have formed their opinion of that nation from its condition during their own time. It will be remarked, however, in examining the early Spanish poets, that even in the wars with the Moors, as early as the eleventh century, they ascribe to their heroes a spirit of charity and humanity toward their enemies as a quality to be highly commended. All their most celebrated men, as Bernardo del Carpio, the Cid and Alfonso VI had fought in the

ranks of the Moors. About the twelfth century, the kings of Aragon granted free liberty of conscience even to the sectaries who afterward acquired the name of Albigenes. Peter II of Aragon was slain while fighting in the cause of religious toleration, and, in the same cause, struggles were continued until 1485, when the people rose against the Inquisition, which Ferdinand the Catholic attempted to impose upon them. To resist the establishment of this odious tribunal, the whole population took up arms; the grand inquisitor was put to death, his agents were expelled, and for a time the people breathed freely.

Ballads of the Cid.

The earliest productions in Spanish poetry have been collected with great diligence by men of letters, especially by Antonio Sanchez, librarian to the king, who published, in 1779, specimens from all the ancient Castilian poets of whose works he could procure the manuscripts. First in his collection is the poem of *The Cid*, written, as he estimates, about the middle of the twelfth century. Although in language and versification almost barbarous, it presents a faithful and interesting description of the manners of the time, and has, moreover, the merit of being the most ancient epic published in a modern language. It is, however, too lengthy to permit of analysis; nor need we tarry long over the romances of the Cid, published more than a century later, though composed at a much earlier date; for they were recited at festivals and sung by soldiers long before

being committed to writing. The following extract is from the ballad of the Cid's wedding.

Within his hall of Burgos the king prepares his feast,
He makes his preparation for many a noble guest.
It is a joyful city, and it is a gallant day;
'Tis the Campeador's wedding, and who will bide away?

Layn Calvo, the Lord Bishop, he first comes forth the
gate,
Behind him comes Ruy Diaz, in all his bridal state;
The crowd makes way before them, as up the street
they go;
For the multitude of people their steps must needs be
slow.

The king had taken order, that they should rear an arch
From house to house all over, in the way where they
must march,
They have hung it all with lances, and shields, and glit-
tering helms,
Brought by the Campeador from out the Moorish realms.

They have scatter'd olive-branches and rushes on the
street,
And ladies fling down garlands at the Campeador's feet;
With tapestry and 'broidery, their balconies between,
To do this bridal honor their walls the burghers screen.

They lead the bulls before them, all covered o'er with
trappings,
The little boys pursue them with hootings and with clap-
pings;
The fool with cap and bladder upon his ass goes prancing
Amid troops of captive maidens, with bells and cymbals
dancing.

With antics and with fooleries, with shouting and with
laughter,

They fill the streets of Burgos, and the devil he comes
after;

For the king had hired the horned fiend for sixteen
maravedis,

And there he goes with hoofs for toes to terrify the ladies.

Then comes the bride Ximena:—the king he holds her
hand,

And the queen, and all in fur and pall, the nobles of the
land:

All down the street, the ears of wheat are round Ximena
flying,

But the king lifts off her bosom sweet whatever there is
lying.

In the *Excommunication of the Cid*, the hero, visiting St. Peter's, is angry to see the arms of Castile planted beneath those of France:

"Ha!" quoth the Cid, "now God forbid! it is a shame, I
wis,

To see the Castle planted beneath the Flower-de-lys.

No harm, I hope, good father pope, although I move thy
chair."

In pieces small he kicked it all; it was of ivory fair.

The pope's own seat, he from his feet did kick it far away,
And the Spanish chair he planted upon its place that day;
Above them all he planted it, and laughed right bitterly,
Looks sour and bad I trow he had, as grim as grim
might be.

Now when the pope was aware of this, he was an angry
man;

His lips that night, with solemn rite, pronounced the
awful ban;

The curse of God, who died on rood, was on that sinner's
head,

To hell and woe man's soul must go, if once that curse
be said.

I wot when the Cid was aware of this, a woeful man
was he;

At dawn of day he came to pray at the blessed father's
knee;

"Absolve me, blessed father, have pity upon me,
Absolve my soul, and penance I for my sin will dree."

"Who is this sinner?" quoth the pope, "who at my foot
doth kneel?"

"I am Rodrigo Diaz, a poor baron of Castile."

Much marveled all were in the hall, when that word
they heard him say.

"Rise up, rise up," the pope he said, "I do thy guilt away:

"I do thy guilt away," he said, "and my curse I blot it out;
God save Rodrigo Diaz, my Christian champion stout!

I trow if I had known thee, my grief it had been sore
To curse Ruy Diaz de Bivar, God's scourge upon the
Moor."

Rodrigo Laynez, whom the Spaniards called Ruy Diaz, and the Moors, Es Sayd, or my lord, whence the word "Cid," was more instrumental even than the princes whom he served in founding the monarchy of Castile, and in the course of his long life, led the conquering arms of his sovereign over a large portion of Spain. He is intimately connected with all our ideas of the glory, the love and chivalry of the Spanish nation; in the foreground of their history and poetry he stands conspicuous, and the renown of his name fills the age in which he lived. So much is his memory held in reverence by the Spaniards that their most

sacred and irrevocable oath is derived from his name. Affé de Rodrigo, by the faith of Rodrigo, says he who would bind his promise by recalling the ancient loyalty of this national hero.

Amadis of Gaul.

Prince Juan Manuel, a cadet of the royal family, was the first distinguished author of the fourteenth century, and in him was the first instance of the union of letters and arms which afterward became so common in Spain. *Count Lucanor*, his chief composition, is the first prose work in the Castilian language, as was the *Decameron*, which appeared about the same time, in the Italian.

It is to a contemporary of Prince Juan that we owe the *Amadis of Gaul*, one of the best and most celebrated of the romances of chivalry. Vasco Lobeira, whom the Spaniards acknowledge to be the author, was a Portuguese, born in the latter part of the thirteenth century, but whose work, for some unexplained reason, did not become generally known until the middle of the fourteenth. It was an imitation of the French romances of chivalry, which, in the preceding century, had acquired so high a reputation throughout Europe, and had produced such important effects on its literature, the French even making some pretensions to the authorship of the *Amadis*. However this may be, the work became naturalized in Spain through the avidity with which it was read by all classes, the enthusiasm it excited, and the powerful influence which it exerted over the taste of the Castilians. The perpetual errors

in geography and history escaped the attention of readers who were utter strangers to those branches of knowledge. The constrained and yet diffuse style of the narrative, instead of being a reproach, was in accordance with the manners of the age, seeming to present a stronger picture of those Gothic and chivalric virtues which the Moorish wars still cherished in Spain, and which the Castilians delighted to attribute to their ancestors in a greater degree than truth warranted. The brilliant fairy mythology of the East, with which commerce with the Arabians had rendered the Spaniards acquainted, assumed fresh charms in this romance, and captivated the imagination. Love, also, was painted with an excess of devotion and of voluptuous tenderness, which affected the people of the south much more powerfully than they would have influenced the French. The passion of love thus represented was so submissive, so constant and so religious that it almost seemed a virtue to entertain it; and yet the author has denied to his heroes none of its privileges. He has effectually captivated inflammable imaginations, by confounding the allurements of voluptuousness with the duties of chivalry.

Chivalric Romances.

The celebrity of the *Amadis* and its numerous imitations, together with frequent translations of all the French romances of chivalry, have given the national poetry of Spain a very animated and chivalric character, and it is to the fourteenth century that we owe those poetical tales for which the Spaniards are so

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eminently distinguished. In most of them we may remark a touching simplicity of expression, a truth of painting and an exquisite sensibility, which invest them with the highest charms. Some are still more distinguished by the powers of invention which they display, forming short chivalric romances, the effect of which is lively and impressive in proportion to the brevity of the poem. The author strikes at once into the middle of his subject, and thus produces a powerful effect upon the imagination, and avoids long and useless introductions. The weakest memory was able to retain them. They were sung by the soldiers on their march, by the rustics in their daily labors and by the women during their domestic occupations. The knowledge of their ancient history and of chivalry was in this manner diffused throughout the whole nation. Few were able to read, or, indeed, had any kind of education; and yet it would have been difficult to have found among them one who was not acquainted with the brilliant adventures of Bernardo del Carpio, of the Cid, of Calaynos the Moor, and of all the knights of the time of Amadis, or of the court of Charlemagne. The people, no doubt, derived very little real instruction from indulging in these pursuits of the imagination. History was confounded in their mind with romance, and the same credit was given to probable events and to marvelous adventures. But this universal acquaintance with the exploits of chivalry, and this deep interest in characters of the noblest and most elevated cast, excited a national feeling of a singularly poetical nature.

The Moors, who were in almost every village, inter-

mingled with the Christians, were still more sensible than the latter to the charm of these romances, and still more attached to the love of music. Even at the present day they can forget their labors, their griefs and their fears, to abandon themselves wholly to the pleasures of song. They are probably the authors of many of the Castilian romances, and others have, perhaps, been composed for their amusement. The Moorish heroes were certainly as conspicuous in these works as the Christians, and the admiration which the writers endeavored to excite for the "Knights of Grenada—gentlemen, although Moors"—strengthened the ties between the two nations, and by cherishing those benevolent feelings, which their priests in vain attempted to destroy, inspired them with mutual regard and esteem.

Bernardo Del Carpio.

Bernardo del Carpio, who has been celebrated in so many romances and tragedies, belonged equally to both nations. The romantic and often fabulous adventures of this Castilian Hercules, are peculiarly suited to poetry, in which his entire career has often been related. He is represented as the offspring of a secret marriage between Sancho Diaz, count of Saldana, and Ximena, the sister of Alfonso the Chaste, a marriage which that king never pardoned. Then comes the story of the long and wretched captivity of the count of Saldana, whom Alfonso threw into a dungeon of the castle of Luna, after having deprived him of his eyes; of the prodigious strength and prowess by which Bernardo, who had been

brought up under another name, proved himself worthy of the royal stock from which he sprang; of his efforts to obtain his father's liberty, which Alfonso had promised him as the reward of his labors, and which he afterward refused; of that king's last treacherous act, when, after all the conquests of Bernardo had been surrendered to him as the ransom of the count of Saldana, he strangled the unfortunate old man and delivered only his breathless body to his son; of the first alliance of Bernardo with the Moors to avenge himself; of his second alliance with them in order to defend the independence of Spain against Charlemagne, and of his victory over Orlando at Roncevalles. Every incident of this ancient hero's life was sung with transport by the Castilians and the Moors.

Another series of romances relates to a more modern period of history, and comprises the wars between the Zegrís and Abencerrages of Grenada. Every joust, every combat and every intrigue which took place in the court of the later Moorish kings was recited by the Castilians, and thus all the old romances are met with in the chivalric history of these civil conflicts.

The extreme simplicity of these romances, unrelieved by a single ornament, would seem to render them easy of translation, but there is a singular charm in the monotonous harmony of the Spanish redondilha which it is difficult to imitate, the short lines of four trochees each following one another with great sweetness, with the imperfect but reiterated rhyme with which the second line in each stanza terminates. A few brief extracts may serve, however, to give an idea without re-

producing the beauties of the original. The first is merely a relation of a simple fact in the history of Spain, which is told with all the melancholy circumstances attending it. The subject is the condition of Roderic, the last king of the Goths, after his defeat at the battle of Xeres, which, in the year 711, opened Spain to the Mussulmen. It was deeply impressed upon the memory of all Castilians, who claim, even at the present day, to be the heirs of the glory of the Goths, and who delight in tracing back their nobility and their departed power to these semi-fabulous times.

THE LAMENTATION OF DON RODERIC.

The hosts of Don Rodrigo were scattered in dismay,
When lost was the eighth battle, nor heart nor hope had
they;

He, when he saw that field was lost, and all his hope
was flown,

He turned him from his flying host, and took his way
alone.

His horse was bleeding, blind and lame—he could no
further go;

Dismounted without path or aim, the king stepped to
and fro:

It was a sight of pity to look on Roderic,
For sore athirst and hungry, he stagger'd faint and sick.

All stain'd and strew'd with dust and blood, like to some
smoldering brand

Plucked from the flame Rodrigo showed; his sword was
in his hand:

But it was hacked into a saw of dark and purple tint;
His jewelled mail had many a flaw, his helmet many a
dint.

He climbed unto a hill-top, the highest he could see;
Thence all about of that wide route, his last long look
took he;
He saw his royal banners, where they lay drench'd and
torn;
He heard the cry of victory, the Arabs' shout of scorn.

He looked for the brave captains that had led the hosts
of Spain,
But all were fled, except the dead—and who could count
the slain?
Where'er his eye could wander, all bloody was the plain;
And while thus he said the tears he shed ran down his
cheeks like rain.

Last night I was the king of Spain—to-day no king am I:
Last night fair castles held my train, to-night where
shall I lie?
Last night a hundred pages did serve me on the knee,
To-night not one I call my own; not one pertains to me.

O luckless, luckless was the hour, and cursed was the day
When I was born to have the power of this great
seignory!
Unhappy me, that I should see the sun go down to-night!
O death, why now so slow art thou, why fearest thou
to smite?

Review of Early Literature.

The poetry of Spain up to the reign of Charles V may be divided into various classes. First, the romances of chivalry, which amount in number to upward of a thousand, and which were at once the delight and instruction of the people. These compositions, which in fact possess more real merit, more sensibility and more invention than any other poetry of that remote period,

have been regarded by the learned with disdain, while the names of their authors have been entirely forgotten. The lyrical poems are animated with great warmth of passion and richness of imagination; but they frequently display traces of too great study and refinement, so that the sentiment suffers from the attempt at fine writing, and conceits usurp the place of true poetical expression. Allegorical pieces were then placed in the first rank, and upon them the authors founded their chief claims to glory. Most of them are frigid and high-flown imitations of Dante, but with no better claims to rival the *Divina Comedia* than those of his Italian imitators. In no direction had the poetry of Castile made any decided progress during the four centuries preceding the reign of Charles V. If the language and versification had become a little smoother and more polished; if something had been gained by adaptation from foreign countries, these advantages were more than offset by pedantry and a vitiated taste.

Such progress as had thus far been made by the Spaniards in the various branches of literature was due almost entirely to their own exertions. If their advance had been slow, they had opened the way for themselves, with little assistance from strangers, for it was not until Charles V had added the rich provinces of Italy to his empire that they derived much benefit from the more advanced condition of letters in other countries. They were proud of what they had accomplished by their own intellectual exertions; they loved their traditions as set forth in prose and verse by their own writers; and hence their poetry preserved its strong original color.

It may further be stated of the literature of Spain that it is much less classical than that of other Latin nations; that it is much less formed upon the model of the Greeks and Romans, less subject to the canons and criticisms of literary lawmakers, and, in short, that it has preserved a more independent character than any of the rest. Not that the Spanish writers have possessed no models to follow or that they have never been imitators. From their earliest masters, the Arabians, they derived their taste for poetry. In the sixteenth century intercourse with the Italians gave a new life, as it were, to their literature, and changed both its spirit and its form. It is a singular fact that those who introduced the riches of foreign lands into the literature of Castile were not scholars, but soldiers. The Spanish universities, though numerous, powerful, rich and with an abundance of privileges, were altogether subject to monastic influence. Among these privileges was the right of refusing to follow the progress of science, and of maintaining all ancient abuses and obsolete modes of instruction as their most precious heirlooms. Moreover, Spain took little part in that zealous cultivation of the learning and poetry of the ancients, which gave so much life to the sixteenth century. Among her poets none were distinguished for their scholastic reputation, or for excellence in Greek or Latin composition. On the contrary, most of them were warriors, whose active and daring spirits sought even a wider range than that of martial emprise. Such an alliance between arts and arms produced its own effects on the literature of Spain, and these were in the main advantageous. In the first

place, it gave a romantic and chivalrous tone to the writings of the Spaniards, and divested their imitations of pedantry.

The Spanish Classics.

In the reign of Charles V begins the classic era of Spanish literature; but as this brings us to the opening of the drama, other forms of poetry can only be briefly noticed. It is singular that the golden age of letters should commence in the darkest days of the Inquisition, established by Ferdinand and Isabella, but not in full force until many years of oppression had accustomed the people to its infernal system. Directed first against the Jews, whom it banished or extirpated; then against the Moors, whom it consigned to the fagot or to exile, it then turned its evil eye on the Spaniards themselves, fearful that the doctrines of the Reformation should find acceptance in Spain. All who attempted to introduce them were committed to the flames, and, terrified by this example, the people avoided all intellectual pursuits which might lead them into such frightful dangers.

Chief among the classical writers of this period were Boscan and Garcilaso, Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, poet, general and politician; Ferdinand de Herrera and Luis Ponce de Leon. To the two last, who belonged to the reign of Charles V, a high rank was assigned.

Ponce de Leon.

The works of Ponce de Leon, who early in youth became a prey to monastic fanaticism, consist chiefly of

translations of classical and Hebrew poetry. Among them is a rendition of *Solomon's Song*, for which he was severely punished, not for seeking improper images in that mystical composition, or for presenting in a worldly light the amours of the king of Jerusalem, which he regarded as purely allegorical, but because the Inquisition had strictly prohibited the translation of any portion of the Bible without special permission. Among lesser lights of the classic age are Fernando d'Acuña, a writer of elegies and sonnets; Gutiere de Catina, an imitator of Anacreon; Pedro de Padillo, a rival of Garcilaso, and Gaspar Gil Polo, who continued and, as some think, improved on the romance of Montemayor.

Influence of the Classic Poets.

Such are the men who are properly called the classics of Spain, who, during the brilliant reign of Charles V, and in the midst of the disturbances which the ambitious policy of that prince created in Europe, changed the versification, the national taste, and almost the language, of Castile; who gave to the poetry of that country its most graceful, its most elegant and most correct form, and who have been the models of all who, from that period, have had any pretensions to classical purity. It is certainly a matter of surprise to find so few traces of a warlike era in their compositions; to hear them, amid all the intoxicating excitement of ambition, singing only their sweet pastoral fancies, their tender, delicate and submissive love. While the Spaniards were inundating Europe and America with blood, Boscan, Garcilaso,

Mendoza and Montemayor, all of them soldiers, and all engaged in the wars which at this period shook the foundations of Christendom, describe themselves as shepherds weaving garlands of flowers, or as lovers tremblingly beseeching the favor of a glance from their mistresses, while they stifle their complaints, suppress all the feeling of nature, and even renounce jealousy, lest it should make them appear lacking in devotion. There is in their verses a Sybaritic softness, a Lydian luxury, which we might expect to meet with in the effeminate Italians, whom servitude had degraded, but which astonishes us in men like the warriors of Charles V.

The effeminate and luxurious enjoyments of life and love, which peculiarly characterize the Spanish poetry of this age, are discoverable in an equal degree in the Latin and Greek poets who wrote after the extinction of their national liberties. Propertius and Tibullus, as well as Theocritus, sometimes indulge in a degree of languor and tenderness which approaches to insipidity. They appear proud of exhibiting their effeminacy, as if for the purpose of demonstrating that they have voluntarily adopted it, and that they have not yielded to it from the influence of fear. The enervated poetry of the Spanish classics was, perhaps, suggested to them by similar motives, and by their desire to preserve the dignity of their character; but for this very reason the Castilian poetry of the reign of Charles V was of a transitory nature, and at the highest pitch of its reputation the symptoms of its approaching decay might be distinctly seen.

The golden age of Spanish literature extends approximately from 1550 to 1650. Before the reign of the Catholic sovereigns there was, indeed, only a Castilian literature, and that largely influenced by imitations of the French and Italian. The union of the crowns of Aragon and Castile, and afterward the advent of the house of Austria, together with the king of Spain's election as emperor, resulted in the creation at once of the political unity of Spain and of Spanish literature. After the death of Philip IV, the nation, exhausted by wars, colonization and misrule, produced nothing of value; its literary genius sank in the general decline.

II.

Early Dramas and Epics.

To Spain, rather than to Italy, belong, as we have seen, the highest honors of the Renaissance; for here was first created and perfected a purely national form of drama. If, in tragedy, Spain possessed no writer with the powers of an Alfieri, or even of a Trissino, in comedy she far surpassed the Italians, while her romantic drama, a form that she made peculiarly her own, was imitated or adapted by nearly all European nations, Teutonic as well as Romance. That the literature of Spain should display a strongly individual character was to be expected in a country that, for centuries after the crusades, had been a battle-ground between the crescent and the cross, the people deriving from their conquerors the rich glow of color characteristic of their national life, especially in literature and art, together with extreme refinement in their treatment of the passion of love. When the drama arose among them they had held little intercourse with other European nations, and being formed on the ancient Castilian taste, and suited to the manners, habits and peculiarities of the people for whom it was intended, it was much more irregular than that of other

European countries. It did not display the same learning; nor was it formed upon those ingenious rules to which Aristotle had subjected the art of poetry. The object of dramatists was to affect the hearts of their countrymen, to harmonize with their opinions and customs, and above all, to flatter their pride. And so, in a measure, it is at the present day. Neither foreign nor native criticism, nor the prizes of their academies, nor the favors of their princes have ever succeeded in persuading them to adopt any of the systems which are predominant elsewhere in Europe.

Even when borrowing from other nations, Castilian poets were very imperfectly acquainted with what they borrowed, and before making use of it, modified and adapted it to their own ideas. The Arabians, their first instructors, were ignorant of the drama; the Provençals and the Catalans had very little knowledge of it; nor could the Castilians themselves boast of a theatre until the time of Charles V. They studied but little, and cared still less for imitating the classical drama; but their officers had beheld, in the wars of Italy, the theatrical representations at the court of Ferrara and of many Italian princes. In emulation of these spectacles they attempted to introduce into their native land the form of entertainment that was so much in favor in the country where they had borne arms.

It was the custom of the Spaniards to represent on the stage not only the leading incidents of their national history, but also those complicated intrigues, those feats of dexterity and turns of fortune which delighted their imagination and reminded them of their Moorish

romances—ininitely more fertile in adventures than those of the Italians or the French. Moreover, the historic drama of Spain differed essentially from that of Italy, where, at least until the time of Alfieri, the scenes were usually laid in bygone ages, or in distant climes. The Castilians, on the other hand, drew their subjects from their own times and from the history of Castile; or, if the scenes were in other realms or in earlier cycles, they still preserved their own manners, always presenting a more animated and faithful picture than was found on the more conventional stage of Italy. In the Spanish theatre was reflected the glorious era in which the drama was at its best, when the pride of the nation was roused by its victories, and almost every play was filled with “the stern joys of battle.” When the age of liberty was passed, the men of Castile placed their pride in chivalry, becoming romantic when it was no longer possible to be heroic, and substituting the pride of honor for the pride of patriotism when the latter had ceased to exist.

Novels of Cervantes.

In passing under review the dramatic Renaissance, we have seen what Cervantes accomplished on behalf of the Spanish drama, and before proceeding further, some mention may here be made of his *Exemplary Novels*, perhaps the least known of his works, though serving as the subjects of many romantic dramas and presenting a truthful and graphic picture of the Castilians of his day. Cervantes, it need hardly be said, was eminently gifted with the narrative faculty, one so closely con-

nected with dramatic power that they would seem to be almost inseparable. The novelist, in common with the dramatist, should be able to give to every object the colors of truth and nature, to every character the appearance of completeness and probability; to bring before the reader by words, as clearly and vividly as the dramatist by action, the events which he describes; to say exactly what ought to be said, and to say no more. It is this talent that has given to Cervantes his world-wide fame, for his most celebrated works are the romances, in which richness of invention is accompanied with charms of style and with the happy art of grouping incidents and describing character in their most attractive form. It is in this, far more than in his dramas, that his genius appears at its best, and in nothing more, perhaps, except for his *Don Quixote*, than in the series of fanciful stories published when he was sixty-five years of age, and almost the last of his writings.

The Gipsy Girl.

First among the *Exemplary Novels* is *La Gitanilla*, or the *Gipsy Girl*, containing an interesting picture of a race of people who were formerly spread over all Europe, though they nowhere submitted themselves to the laws of society. About the middle of the fourteenth century bands of gipsies first appeared in Europe, and were called indifferently Egyptians and Bohemians, though by many considered as pariahs escaped from India. From that period down to the present day they have continued to wander through the

various countries of Europe, subsisting by petty thefts, by levying contributions on the superstitious, or by dancing, singing and playing at festivals. They have now almost entirely disappeared from many of the nations on the continent, the rigorous police systems of France, Italy and Germany not suffering the existence of a race of vagabonds who pay no regard to the rights of property and who despise the laws. There are still, however, numbers of these people to be found in England, where the legislature formerly sanctioned such cruel enactments against them that it was found impossible to put them into execution. Many, likewise, still exist in Russia, and some in Spain, where the mildness of the climate and the physical features of the country are highly favorable to the wild and wandering life, for which they seem to have inherited a taste from the eastern nations. The community as it existed in the time of Cervantes was far more numerous and their liberty far more complete than at any subsequent time; while the superstition of the people afforded them a readier support.

The heroine of the first tale, who is called Preciosa, accompanied by three young girls of about fifteen years of age, all gipsies like herself, frequents the streets of Madrid under the superintendence of an old woman, for the purpose of amusing the public in the coffee-houses and other public places, by dancing to the sound of the tamborine, which she sometimes accompanies by songs and verses either of her own extemporaneous composition, or composed by poets who were employed by the gipsies. The noble and wealthy invited them into their

houses to see them dance, and the ladies to have their fortunes told. Preciosa, who was modest and much respected, yet possessed all the vivacity of mien, the gaiety and promptitude of repartee which so remarkably distinguished her race. She was in request even at religious festivals, where she chanted songs in honor of the Virgin and the saints. In all probability this apparent devotion of the Bohemians, who never take any part in public worship, protected them in Spain, where they were called *Christianos Nuevos*, from the animadversion of the Inquisition. The delicacy and beauty of Preciosa gained the heart of a cavalier, not more distinguished by his fortune than by his appearance; but she refused to accept his hand unless he consented to pass a probation of two years among the gipsies, adopting their mode of life. One of the oldest gipsies addresses the cavalier, who assumes the name of Andres, and her speech is remarkable for the purity and elegance of language and breadth of thought which are peculiar to Cervantes. The gipsy takes Preciosa by the hand, and presents her to Andres:

"We appropriate to you the companionship of this young girl, who is the flower and ornament of all the gipsies to be found throughout Spain. It is now within your own power to consider her either as your wife or as your mistress. Examine her thoroughly, weigh maturely whether she is pleasing to you, find out whether she has any defect, and should you fancy that you are not calculated for each other, throw your eyes around upon all the other gipsy girls, and you shall have the object of your selection. But we warn you that

when once you have made your choice, you cannot retract, and must be contented with your fate. No one dares to encroach upon his friend, and hence we are shielded from the torments of jealousy. Adultery is never committed among us; for if in any instance our wives or our mistresses are detected in infringing our laws, we inflict punishment with the utmost severity. You must also be apprised that we never have resort to courts of justice; we have our own jurisdiction; we execute judgment ourselves; we are both judges and executioners; and, after regular condemnation, we get rid of the parties by burying them in the mountains and deserts, and no person whatsoever, not even their parents, can obtain information of them, or bring us to account for their deaths. It is the dread of this summary jurisdiction which preserves chastity within its natural bounds; and thence it is, as I have already stated, that we live in perfect tranquility on this score, so dreadfully mischievous and annoying in other societies. There are few things which we possess that we do not possess in common; but wives and mistresses are a sacred exception. We command the whole universe, the fields, the fruits, the herbage, the forests, the mountains, the rivers, and the fountains, the stars and all the elements of nature. Early accustomed to hardships, we can scarcely be said to be sufferers; we sleep as soundly and as comfortably upon the ground as upon beds of down; and the parched skin of our bodies is to us equal to a coat of mail, impenetrable to the inclemencies of the weather. Insensible to grief, the most cruel torture does not afflict us, and under whatever form they make

us encounter death, we do not shrink even so much as to change of color. We have learned to despise death. We make no distinction between the affirmative and the negative when we find it absolutely necessary to our purpose. We are often martyrs, but we never turn informers. We sing, though loaded with chains in the darkest dungeons, and our lips are hermetically sealed under all the severe inflictions of the rack. The great and undisguised object of our profession is furtively to seize the property of others, and appropriate it to our own use, thereby invariably imitating the plausible but perfidious example of the generality of mankind under one mask or other, in which, however, we have no occasion to court witnesses to instruct us. In the day we employ ourselves in insignificant, amusing, trifling matters, but we devote the night and its accommodating darkness to the great object of our professional combination. The brilliancy of glory, the etiquette of honor and the pride of ambition form no obstacles to us as they do in other fraternities. Hence we are exempt from that base, cowardly and infamous servitude which degrades the noble and high-born into slaves."

Such was the singular race of people who lived the life of the uncultivated savage in the midst of society; who preserved manners, a language and probably a religion of their own, maintaining their independence in Spain, England and Russia for nearly five hundred years. It may be supposed that the *Gipsy Girl* terminates like every other romance, the heroine of which is of low birth. Preciosa is discovered to be the daugh-

ter of a titled lady, and her real rank being revealed, she is married to her lover.

An Indian Hero.

In the library of Don Quixote, according to Cervantes, was found the epic *Araucana*, which he pronounces the best Castilians possessed. Strange to say, this heroic poem was composed in South America, where its author, Don Alonzo de Ercilla, was a subaltern in the Spanish army. His imagination was kindled by the reckless courage and self-sacrifice of the Indians. Many striking scenes from this work were utilized by subsequent dramatists. The finest may be quoted here.

After years of stubborn resistance Caupolican is at length surprised and taken prisoner through the treachery of one of his soldiers. He voluntarily discovers his name to the Spaniards, and declares that he has the power of treating with them so as to bind the whole nation. He engages that the Araucans shall with himself embrace Christianity, and submit to the dominion of Philip, and represents that his captivity may thus be the means of procuring peace to the entire country; but he is equally prepared for death:

Nor spoke the Indian more, but with an eye
Intrepid, and a spirit all elate,
With unblanched cheek, the last decree of fate
Calmly awaited; or to live or die
To him was equal; fortune's tempest dread
Could frown no further vengeance on his head;
Though bound a captive, and in fetters, still
Shone through his soul th' unconquerable will;
His aspect nobly bold, from innate valor bred.

On confessing his name, he is sentenced to death, and after being converted and baptized,

Thus to the bloody scaffold he drew nigh,
That distant from the camp an arrow's flight,
Raised on the plain, appeared before his sight,
And to the gazing crowd was seen on high.
Ascending then the stage, with brow elate,
He saw the dread preparatives of fate;
Saw, without change of temper or of blood,
The armament of death, that round him stood,
With placid mien, as in his free-born state.

Thus far he has calmly submitted to his fate, but at the final indignity his pride and stoicism give way:

The busy hangman now approach'd his side
To seize his prey, a branded negro slave,
The wretched freightage of the Atlantic wave.
This last indignity too deeply tried
The monarch's spirit, though with soul unmov'd
He yet had every frown of fortune prov'd;
He could not brook, though in this bloody strife,
So base an ending to his noble life,
And all indignant thus the hostile chief reprov'd.

"Oh deed unworthy of the Christian race!
Is this your boasted honor, this the dower
Of noble valor in her dying hour,
To bid me perish by a hand so base?
Death is a full atonement, and life fled,
We war no longer with the helpless dead;
This is not death, but mockery and despite,
Thus to afflict my spirit in her flight,
And heap this dark dishonor on my head.

"Amidst your swords that now so silent rest,
That drank my country's blood, and in the strife

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*Numantia now is turned into a lake
Of red blood, choked with corpses infinite,
Herself being her own homicide.*

NUMANTIA.—CERVANTES.



A. RUSSELL

Of furious battle thirsted for my life,
 Can none be found to pierce my warrior breast?
 Whatever sorrows on my head descend,
 Whatever griefs my suffering heart may rend,
 Let not a slave's polluted touch disgrace
 Caupolican, the latest of his race;
 Nor such a deed of shame his hour of death attend."

So spoke the indignant chief, and sudden turn'd
 Upon the miscreant slave, and though oppress'd
 With galling weight of fetters, on the breast
 He smote him fierce, and from the scaffold spurn'd.

"Which are the savages—the Spaniards or Araucans?" we are tempted to ask after reading the protest of this noble Indian cacique, who, a moment later, falls pierced by a hundred arrows. And here the epic should have ended, instead of being carried, as it is, through many additional cantos which we will not follow. The story is dramatized by Lopé de Vega, and with all its faults, it was not without reason that Voltaire borrowed from it the beautiful conception of his *Alzire*.

Before proceeding further with the Spanish drama, may be given, by way of leave-taking with Cervantes, another passage from his *Numantia*. Entering the city, Caius Marius finds it filled only with burning ruins and corpses, the citizens throwing themselves and their goods into the flames. Thus he addresses Scipio:

Caius Marius.—In vain, illustrious general, have been
 Our forces occupied in this campaign.
 In vain hast thou thyself proved diligent,—
 For into smoke and wind converted are
 Expectations sure of victory,

By your unwearied industry secured.
The lamentable end and the sad history
Of the unvanquished city Numantia,
Deserve a fame which no time can destroy.
The inmates have by your loss gain acquired,
Wresting the triumph from your receiving hands,
And leaving life with magnanimity,
All our plans vain have eventuated;
Their honored purpose has been of more avail
Than all the power and subtlety of Rome.
The populace worn out by violent end
Finished the misery of their woeful days,
Extending wide the sad conclusion.
Numantia now is turned into a lake
Of red blood, choked with corpses infinite,
Herself being her own homicide.
From th' overweighted and unequal chain
Of bitter servitude they have escaped
With quick audacity, to fear unknown.
In the square's centre elevated stands
The burning element destined for victims, whose
Bodies and goods yield aliment to the fire.
At the precise time when it I went to see
The furious Theogenes, Numantian,
To finish his existence covetous,
Curses ejecting his bitter token short,
In the flame's centre madly plunged himself,
Fired by extraordinary temerity,
And at the moment of the plunge, cried, Fame,
Occupy here your tongue and eke your eyes
On this exploit, whose virtue loudly sings.
Romans advance, already through the spoils
Of the city melted into dust and smoke.
Its flowers and fruits all into brambles changed,
From hence on foot, with thoughts as free as air,
A large portion have I traversed of this town,
Through streets and passes, indirect crooked ways,
I not a solitary Numantian
Have found who, taken from amongst the quick,
Could information render for what cause,

In what way, and with what auxiliaries
This marvellous distraction did they
Commit, hastening the sad career of death.

Scipio.—My very bosom was it enrapt by chance
With barbarous arrogance and foul death replete,
And empty fount of cruelty? Is it by chance
Unto my nature foreign that I use
Benignity and clemency to the foe
Vanquished, as most the victor it becomes?
Ill would you hold it, if indeed were known
The valor of Numantia in my breast,
To vanquish and to pardon equally born.

Classic and Romantic Drama.

In their dramatic literature the nations of Europe all made idols of their favorite authors, against whom adverse criticism was prohibited. As the French worship Corneille or Racine, the English pay to Shakespeare almost the honors of a god, while Calderon in Spain and Schiller in Germany are also regarded with the deepest veneration. As English critics have rebuked with severity the preference which, in speaking of Alfieri, has been given to the classical school, the French have censured, with no less severity, the taste for the romantic drama of Calderon. To distinguish between the two conflicting systems, the terms classical and romantic were long employed, though it would, perhaps, be difficult to attach to them any precise meaning. All these nations have agreed to apply the term classical not only to those whose productions are directly imitated from the Greeks and Romans, but to those who have adhered with sufficient closeness to such models. Yet, delighting

in the study of their own popular traditions, and deeply imbued with the feelings and ideas of the middle ages, they gave their attention more to the vein of poetry contained in their own antiquities than to those of foreign lands. Thus arose the style of chivalric poetry which develops feelings of patriotism and magnifies our ancestors in the eyes of their posterity. To this the Germans gave the name of romantic, because such was the language of the troubadours, who first excited these new emotions; because the civilization of modern times began with the Roman nations, and because the poetry, like the language of those nations, was stamped with the twofold character of the Roman world and of the Teutonic tribes which subdued it. Spain was the birthplace of the romantic as of other forms of the drama; for under that term cannot be properly classed the melodrama, with its false and exaggerated sentiment, its improbability and its violation of the rules of dramatic art, to say nothing of common sense.

III.

Lopé de Vega.

We have already seen what, according to Cervantes, was the origin of the Spanish theatre and what Cervantes himself accomplished in its cause. We have also seen how he admired the genius of Lopé de Vega, who practically created the national drama of his country and alone produced a larger number of plays than all the other dramatists of his age. Notwithstanding the specific gravity of his writings, nowhere shall we find a truer representative of the Spain of Philip II than in this voluminous poet, who, after suffering the hardships of poverty and exile, and the pangs of passion, sailed against the foes of the faith in the Invincible Armada, subsequently became a member of the Inquisition and of the order of St. Francis, and after having been decorated by the pope with the cross of Malta, honored by the nobility and idolized by the nation, ended his days with the names of Jesus and Mary on his lips. From the plays of such a writer we may best learn the manners and sentiments, the ideas of religion and honor of the Spain of the Philippine age, the age when she was most prominent in the eyes of Europe and most glorious

in her own. With all its inventiveness and vigor, the genius of Lopé primarily set itself to the task of pleasing the public—the very spirit of whose inner as well as its outer life is mirrored in his works. In them we have, in the words of Lopé's French translator, Baret, "the movement, the clamor, the conflict of unforeseen intrigues suitable to unreflecting spectators; perpetual flatteries addressed to an unextinguishable national pride; the painting of passions dear to a people never tired of admiring itself; the absolute sway of the point of honor; the deification of revenge; the adoration of symbols; buffoonery and burlesque, everywhere beloved of the multitude, but here never defiled by obscenities; for this people has a sense of delicacy, and the foundation of its character is nobility; lastly, the flow of proverbs which at times escape from the gracioso, the comic servant domesticated in the Spanish drama by Lopé, the commonplace literature of those who possess no other."

Biography of Lopé.

Lopé Felix de Vega Carpio was born at Madrid on the 25th of November, 1562, fifteen years after Cervantes. His relations, who were noble, though poor, gave him the basis of a liberal education, and in consequence of their death before he entered the university, he was sent there by the inquisitor-general, Don Jeronimo Manriquez, completing his studies at Alcala. Prodigious of imagination and learning are related of him even at this early period. The duke of Alva, soon after his marriage, took him into his employment as secretary,

but being forced into an affair of honor, Lopé inflicted a dangerous wound on his adversary and was compelled to seek safety in flight. He passed some years in exile, and on his return lost his wife. The grief which he felt upon this occasion, added to his religious and patriotic zeal, drove him into the army, and he took service with the "Invincible Armada," which was intended to place England under the Spanish yoke and was itself almost annihilated. On his return to Madrid he again married, and for some time lived happily in the bosom of his family; but the death of his second wife determined him to renounce the world and enter into orders.

Notwithstanding this change, Lopé continued, to the end of his life, to cultivate poetry with so wonderful a facility that a drama of more than two thousand lines, intermingled with sonnets and enlivened with all kinds of unexpected incidents and intrigues, frequently cost him no more than the labor of a single day. He tells us himself that he has produced more than a hundred plays, which were represented within twenty-four hours after their first conception. What has before been said of the wonderful facility of Italian improvisatori applies with equal truth to the Spaniards, in whose language and metres it was more difficult to compose; but of the hundreds of Castilian improvisatori, who expressed themselves in verse with the same ease as in prose, Lopé was the most remarkable, for the task of versification seems never to have retarded his progress. His friend and biographer, Montalvan, has remarked that he composed more rapidly than his amanuensis could copy.

While Cervantes did much for the Spanish drama, it

was by Lopé de Vega that its national forms were permanently established. Selecting from his ruder predecessors all the varieties that were best worth preserving, he molded them into the shapes best adapted to the capabilities of the stage, as he found it, toward the close of the sixteenth century. While others aided in the work, Lopé was the true founder of the modern drama, not only in Spain, but to a great extent in all European countries, which borrowed largely from the two great southern nations that gave to the secular stage its earliest development, after emerging from the darkness of the middle ages. Not only in giving form and cohesion to the drama, but in the fertility and variety of his own productions, Lopé has no rival among modern authors. His plays and other works almost taxed the powers of the printing press, so that their very number greatly injured his reputation, notwithstanding their general excellence. It is estimated that his writings contained more than 21,000,000 lines and covered about 133,000 large and closely written sheets of paper, a quantity which few ordinary men could copy within the span of a lifetime. Doubtless, if he had written one-tenth as much, his labors would have been ten times as effectual; yet in his own special line, as a comedian, he is unrivaled except by Calderon.

The managers of the theatres, who always kept him on the spur, left him no time either to read or revise his compositions, and with inconceivable fertility he produced 1,800 comedies and 400 autos sacramentales, in all 2,200 dramas, of which about 300 have been published in 25 quarto volumes. His other poems were

reprinted at Madrid in 1776, under the title of the detached works of Lopé de Vega, in 21 volumes in quarto. His prodigious literary labors produced money as well as glory, and he amassed 100,000 ducats; but his treasures did not long abide with him. The poor ever found his purse open to them, and the pomp and extravagance characteristic of Castilians soon dissipated his wealth. After living in splendor, he died almost in poverty.

No poet ever enjoyed in his lifetime so much of glory and adulation. When and wherever he showed himself, a crowd surrounded him and saluted him as "the prodigy of nature." Children followed him with cries of pleasure, and every eye was fixed upon him. The religious college of Madrid, of which he was a member, elected him their president; Pope Urban VIII presented him with the cross of Malta, the title of Doctor of Theology and the diploma of treasurer of the Apostolic chamber, marks of distinction which he owed at least as much to his fanatical zeal as to his poems. In the midst of the homage thus rendered he died on the 26th of August, 1635, having attained the age of seventy-three. His obsequies were celebrated with royal pomp. Three bishops in their pontifical habits officiated for three days at the funeral of the "Spanish phoenix," as he is called in the title page of his comedies, his writings being alone sufficient to furnish forth a library of no insignificant proportions. He wrote negligently and he matured nothing; his great and incontestable merit was that he gave the Spanish stage a range and scope of which it had not before been thought capable, and

taught his contemporaries how to find dramatic situations and develop a plot.

Dramatic Productions of Lope.

The plays of Lope, in common with those of the national drama of Spain in general, are divided into classes which it is not always easy to keep distinct from one another; nor were they perhaps so intended. After composing, in early youth, eclogues, pastoral plays and allegorical moralities in the style of the monastic drama, he began his active career at Madrid about 1590, and the pieces which he henceforth produced have been distributed under the following heads: First, the so-called *comedias de capa y espada*—not comedies proper, but dramas, the principal personages in which are taken from the classes of society which wore cloak and sword. Gallantry is their main theme; an interesting and complicated, but well-constructed and perspicuous intrigue their chief feature, and this is usually accompanied by an underplot in which the gracioso plays his part. This is the favorite species of the national Spanish theatre; and to the plots of such plays the drama of other nations owes a debt almost incalculable in extent. Second, the *comedias heroicas* are distinguished by some of their personages being of royal or exalted rank, and by their themes being often historical and largely taken from national annals, or founded on contemporary or recent events. Hence they exhibit a greater gravity of tone; but in other respects there is little difference between them and the cloak and sword comedies with which they

share the element of comic underplots. Third, plays whose scene is laid in common life, but for which no special name appears to have existed.

Meanwhile, both Lopé and his successors were too devoted sons of the church not to acknowledge, in some sort, her claim to influence the drama. This claim, indeed, she had never relinquished, even when she could no longer retain control over the stage, and, for a time, was able to reassert it; for the exhibition of all secular plays was prohibited by Philip II, then on his death-bed, and so remained for two or three years. Lopé, with his usual versatility, proceeded to supply religious plays of various kinds. After a few dramas on scriptural subjects he turned to the legends of the saints, and of these he wrote many which were accepted as a later Spanish variety of the miracle-play. He also threw himself with special zeal and success into the composition of another kind of religious play—a development of the English Corpus Christi pageants, in honor of which all the theatres were required to close their doors for a month. These were the famous autos sacramentales—i. e., solemn acts or proceedings in honor of the sacrament, and which were performed in the open air by actors who had filled the cars of the sacred procession. They were arranged on a fixed scheme, comprising a prologue in dialogue form between two or more actors in character, a farce, and the auto proper, an allegorical scene of religious purport. As an example of the last may be cited the *Bridge of the World*, in which the prince of darkness in vain seeks to defend the bridge against the knight of the cross, who finally leads the soul of Man

in triumph across it. This long-lived popular species, together with the old dramatic dialogue known as the eclogues, completes the list of the several varieties of Lope's dramatic works.

The Discreet Revenge.

Intrigue is the essence of the secular drama of Spain. In the vast majority of plays we discover a complication of incidents, love-affairs, stratagems and combats, which are sufficiently extraordinary and by no means easy to follow, especially if we measure them by the standards of other nations; so that strangers often find great difficulty in following the thread of a piece represented upon the stage of a Madrid theatre, while the Spaniards themselves can trace it with perfect facility. Let us take, for instance, *The Discreet Revenge*, a national and historic drama, one of the simplest of its kind, and partly for that reason possessed of unusual merit. The scene is laid in Portugal, in the reign of Alfonso III.* The hero is Don Juan de Meneses, the favorite of the king, who was compelled to defend himself against the dark intrigues of a number of envious courtiers. At the opening of the play he is seen with his squire, Tello, waiting until his cousin, Donna Anna, of whom he is enamored, shall come forth from church. His rival, Vasco Nuño, accompanied by his friend, Ramiro, then arrives, also with the object of paying attention to the lady. At length she appears at the door of the sanctuary, and chancing to drop her glove, the two gallants rush forward to catch it. This incident causes a dispute;

*Alonzo, in the English Translations.

angry looks pass, and defiances are interchanged. Donna Anna, in order to prevent a quarrel, decides against her cousin in favor of Nuño, to whom, however, she is indifferent. Having dismissed them both, she returns to the stage to justify herself to Meneses, and to satisfy him that she has only pretended to prefer his rival in order to prevent a dangerous quarrel. This scene, which serves as an exposition of the plot, is intended to give us an insight into the happy love of Meneses, his jealous disposition, and the rivalry of Nuño.

The second scene represents Alonzo's council of state, and here it may be remarked that in Spanish, as in English dramas, it is not the entrance of a fresh actor which constitutes a new scene, but the appearance of characters in a situation or place which has no immediate connection with the preceding.

Alonzo had been raised to the throne of Portugal by a party which had deposed his brother, Sancho, a negligent, voluptuous and incapable prince. The former had been married to a French princess named Matilda, the heiress of the countess of Boulogne, a lady fifty years of age, while her husband was a youth. Having no children by her, and no prospect of an heir, he was desirous of divorcing the princess, who had not followed him into Portugal. The reasons of state, the wish of settling the succession to the crown, on the one hand, and on the other the rights of Matilda, are discussed in council with much dignity. Vasco Nuño and Ramiro persuade the king to demand a divorce from the pontiff Clement IV, which the latter could not refuse. Don Juan de Men-

eses, on the contrary, is desirous that the king should divide all the pleasures of royalty with her from whom he derived his revenues when he had no realm of his own.

Alonzo puts an end to the discussion, which was growing warm, between Nuño and Meneses, but desires the latter to remain, for he had made proof of his fidelity amid the greatest misfortunes. He informs him that he has not only determined to divorce Matilda, but to marry Beatrix, the daughter of Alfonso X of Castile, who had offered the kingdom of Algarves as a dowry, and having selected him as his ambassador to the court of Seville, he commands him to depart the same night, and to preserve the strictest silence. Don Juan frankly avows that he feels great regret in being compelled to leave his cousin at the moment when he is disputing her love with a rival who may bear away the prize; but Alonzo promises to attend himself to the interests of his friend, and to watch over his mistress. Juan, however, does not place implicit confidence in his promise, and orders his squire to keep guard at night around the mansion of his beloved. He religiously preserves the secret intrusted to him, and departs without taking leave of Donna Anna, being compelled even to neglect an appointment which she had herself made with him for that very evening.

It was not without good grounds that Meneses had ordered Tello to keep guard during the night. Nuño, Ramiro, and their squire, Rodrigo, approach the mansion of Donna Anna. It was the hour at which she had appointed to meet Don Juan, whom she imagines she

sees in the person of Nuño. Tello, who is watching, contrives by an artifice to learn their names, but, as they are three to one, he does not venture to attack them. While he is observing them at a distance, the king appears at the bottom of the same street. Tello, without recognizing him, requests his assistance, and a scene takes place which, whimsical as it is, from its excess of chivalric spirit, yet possesses both truth and originality:

Tello.—A cavalier advances to the grate;
Strange as it is, I'll speak at any rate.

Alonzo.—Who's there?

Tel.—Put up your sword! One who demands
Naught but a favor, Seignor, at your hands.

Alo.—So late, and in this lonely place address'd,
Who, think you, will attend to such request?

Tel.—He who boasts gentle blood; and you are he,
As in your noble countenance I see.

Alo.—True, I'm a gentleman; and, by God's grace,
One also of a known and noble race.

Tel.—You know the laws of honor, then; the best
Of all the code is to defend the oppress'd.

Alo.—But first 'tis meet we know who's in the right.

Tel.—To cut the matter short, pray, will you fight?

Alo.—You're not a robber! I can scarce think so,
Judging you from your cloak.

Tel.—No, marry, no.
Fear it not.

Alo.—Well! what would you have me do?

Tel.—Behind that grating does an angel dwell,
And he who loves her left me sentinel,
To guard her safety in his absence hence.
You see those men? You see the difference:
'Tis three to one. Now, if you'll lend a hand,
I'll cudgel them till none of them can stand.

Alo.—You've puzzled me. I am a knight, 'tis true,
And therefore am I bound to stand by you.
And yet, methinks, 'tis indiscreet in us
To meddle in a stranger's quarrel thus.

Tel.—Pho! never fear! let but the rascals see
That I have got another man with me,
I'll settle them, though three or thirty-three.

Alo.—Fear! in my life I never yet knew fear!
I only dread our enemies should hear
Of this adventure, and should say of it
That it displays our rashness, not our wit.
Tell me his name whose place to-night you fill,
I promise I'll stick by you, come what will.

Tel.—Exceeding good—you promise—his name is
Don Juan de Meneses.

Alo.—Why, then this
Most lucky is; his dearest friend am I;
So take your sword, we'll strike them instantly.

Tel.—You gentlemen there! peeping through the blind,
March off! or I shall break your heads, you'll find.

Nuño.—Pray, are you arm'd to carry the thing through?

Tel.—Arm'd! like the devil.

Rodrigo.—Kill the rascal, do. (They fight.)

Tel.—Now help, Sir knight.

Rod.—The bully fights, I swear!

Nuño.—Forbear, or you'll disgrace this house.—Forbear!

Tel.—A coward's poor excuse!

Alo.—Follow them out.

Tel.—O let me kiss a thousand times the spot
On which you stand. Could but the king have seen
Your valorous deeds, you shortly would have been
His general at Ceuta.

Alo.—Sir, my rank
Is such that at his table I have drank.

Tel.—What feints! what thrusts! what quickness! and what
fire!

May I not know what I so much desire,
Your name?

Alo.—I'd really tell you, had I power;
Come to the palace your first vacant hour.

Tel.—But if I come, how shall I know you then?

Alo.—Give me some trifle that you prize not; when
You see me next, I'll hand it you again.

Tel.—I've naught about me that is useless. Yes,
I've got my purse, which very useless is,
For it is always empty—here, take this!

Alo.—What, empty!

Tel.—Aye, good Seignor: squires like me
Boast very little silver, as you see.

We may easily imagine that a very diverting scene occurs in the second act, when the king restores his purse to Tello, and thus discloses his name. The monarch inquires whether Tello is willing to receive a present, and the squire answers him by saying that when his father died he gave particular directions that one hand should be left out of the grave, in order that he might be able to receive what any one might be disposed to give. The king then bestows a pension upon him and the dignity of an *alcalde* of St. John, to which office is attached the privilege of having a key to every fortress.

In the second act Don Juan de Meneses returns to Portugal with Beatrix of Castile. This princess, the most amiable and beautiful woman of her age, feels as lively a passion for Alonzo as that with which the monarch is himself inspired. With the approbation of the council of state, the marriage is celebrated before a dispensation for that purpose has been obtained from Rome. The attachment of Alonzo to Beatrix only

strengthens the gratitude which he feels toward Meneses, so that he confides to him the direction of all his affairs; every petitioner is referred to him; and the jealousy of the courtiers is thus augmented and confirmed. His ruin is sworn by all, and they attempt to destroy him by the most perfidious artifice. Nuño, above all, endeavors to wound him in the tenderest point, demanding from the king the hand of Donna Anna de Meneses. He has already won the approbation of her father, and promises to procure her own consent under her hand. Don Juan undertakes to offer no opposition to their union, provided he is furnished with this proof of the infidelity of his mistress. Nuño deceitfully procures a paper by which Donna Anna appears to give her consent. The jealousy of the two lovers is thus raised to the highest pitch; but a meeting and an explanation take place.

In the third act Nuño attempts to awaken the jealousy of Donna Anna by persuading her that Don Juan is in love with Inez, one of the maids of honor to the queen, whilst his friend Don Ramiro addresses her, and makes proposals of marriage as if from Don Juan. Inez receives the overture with great joy, and announces it to the queen. This news reaches the ears of Donna Anna, and in an interview with her lover, instead of soothing him, she excites him to challenge Nuño. She tells him that when she prevented a quarrel formerly, her love only was in question, but that now her jealousy is awakened; that his danger is nothing in comparison with her sufferings, and that she can no longer listen to the voice of prudence. Before Meneses

is able to meet Nuño, a fresh intrigue at court exposes him to the greatest danger. The pontiff refuses the dispensation for the divorce of the king and his marriage with Beatrix. The king and the princess are overwhelmed. The countess of Boulogne, being unwilling that her marriage should be dissolved, had written to Rome to oppose the divorce. The enemies of Don Juan present to the king a forged letter, as from the countess to Juan, in order to establish an understanding between them, and to induce a belief that the favorite had been secretly intriguing at Rome against the king and queen. Alonzo is enraged at the idea of being betrayed by his friend. He orders him to be arrested, and without examination or hearing condemns him to death. The office of arresting him is given to his enemies, and he is taken into custody by Ramiro. The following is the scene in which he is arrested:

Juan.—I yield me to the king's commands, nor fear
To lose the royal favor, on his truth
Securely resting. From these prison walls,
Like Joseph, shall I step victoriously
In glory. Yet I grieve, noble Ramiro,
My tongue may utter not what my heart would—
You understand me.

Ramiro.—All things have their end,
And so shall thy captivity, and then
Fair answer will I grant thee if thou seek'st it.

Juan.—So be it, and these words of thine shall be
My consolation.

Fasco.—It is little fitting
To cast defiance at the very moment
When you are rendering up your sword; and yet
4—Vol. VI.

Methinks it hath not shed such blood in Afric
That it should blanch the cheek of bold Ramiro.

Juan.—Vasco de Acuña, I do marvel not
At these adverse mutations of my fortune;
But yet I do admire to see ye three
Building ambitious hopes upon my ruin,
Because the king is but a man, and ye
Think to deceive him. Maugre all the envy
Bred in you by his favors shown to me,
All of you know how well this sword, which now
I render up, has served the king at Coimbra,
And at Algarves, too, if not in Afric.
But wherefore do I weakly tax myself
To satisfy your furious hate? There, take it;
But know that speedily ye all shall pay me
For this foul injury.

Vas.—Wert thou not prisoner
Thou wouldst not thus have boasted.

Juan.—My good friend Nuño, be not so hard with me.

Ram.—Advance! March forward, guard.

Juan.—Tello!

Tello.—My lord!

Juan.—Tello, remember you relate this scene.

The biting taunt of Nuño, who reproaches Juan with presuming not on his strength, but on his weakness, could not be put into the mouth of any man who was not highly sensitive upon the point of honor. In fact, the traitors of the Spanish stage are never cowards. The public would not have suffered so shameful a representation.

Anna de Meneses, who is still passionately in love with Juan, succeeds in delivering him from prison. This she accomplishes through the faithful Tello, who holds the key of the fortress, and through the zeal of Inez,

who fearlessly exposes herself on behalf of him whom she believes her lover. Donna Anna and Juan experience a peculiar pleasure in availing themselves of these deceitful practices, and as soon as the latter is at liberty, instead of attempting to justify himself, he turns upon his enemies their own arms. By his procurement, certain forged letters are conveyed to the king, from which it would appear that the enemies of Don Juan have been guilty of the very treasons with which he had been charged. The hostile courtiers are consequently exiled, and Juan is restored to favor, while the general satisfaction is augmented by the news, which at this time arrives, of the death of the countess of Boulogne, by which the legality of the nuptials between Alonzo and Beatrix is firmly established.

The Comedy of Intrigue.

It should be remembered that the above is an analysis of a play which probably did not cost its author more than four-and-twenty hours to compose, though one of the best for giving an idea of the peculiar methods of Lopé's comedies, and of the new characters which he gave to the Spanish drama. His works are as much removed from the perfection of the later romantic writers as from that of the authors of antiquity; nor could anything else be expected from the unexampled haste with which he wrote. Some of his productions are very rudely composed, though most of them are lighted up with sparks of genius, and it was by these brilliant traces of superior talent, as well as by the wonderful

fecundity of his pen, that Lope de Vega wrought so great a change in the dramatic literature of his country.

Cervantes had originated the idea of a grand and severe style of tragedy; but after the appearance of Lope, neither tragedy nor comedy, properly speaking, was to be found. Novels and romances usurped the Spanish stage, though not, as yet, the romantic drama. A Spanish comedy, as a German critic remarks, is properly a dramatic novel; like a novel, its interest may be either of a tragic or comic or historical nature, or it may be purely poetical. The rank of the characters cannot assign the class to which it belongs. Princes and potentates, in their places, contribute to the carrying on of the plot, as well as valets and lovers, and they are all mingled together whenever the exigencies of the story render it probable. Not that portrayal of character, nor a satirical vein, is essential either to the Spanish drama or to the novel. The burlesque and the tender, the vulgar and the pathetic, may be mingled together without destroying the spirit of the piece; for the object of the poet is not to keep alive any special emotion. He does not attempt to give a longer duration to the emotion of the spectators than to their laughter. The whole piece turns upon a complicated intrigue, which excites their attention and curiosity; and he thus fills his historical plays with the most extraordinary adventures, and his sacred dramas with miracles.

In the comedies of the cloak and sword, or, as they might properly be called, of intrigue, Lope has almost ignored probability in the order and connection of his scenes. His chief object was to excite interest by the

situations in which his characters were placed, and by the working out of his plot. One intrigue is interwoven with another, and the intricacy of the plot increases, until the author, to terminate the whole, cuts asunder all the knots he cannot otherwise unravel, and marries all the couples who present themselves to him as candidates for that ceremony. Reflections and maxims of prudence are frequently to be met with in the course of his comedies, but of morality, strictly so called, there is not the slightest trace; for the public, for whom he wrote, would not have permitted him to dilate on a subject with which they had already been surfeited from the pulpit. The gallantry on which every intrigue is founded is of the most extravagant nature; not the slightest regard is paid to its decorum; and if it is partially regulated by principles of honor, this is the best that can be said for it. When the passions are portrayed, they possess all the impetuous temperament of the nation. In the reveries of his lovers, Lopé exhibits a fund of romantic declamation, and a *jeux d'esprit* quite inexhaustible. "Love excuses everything" was the maxim of the fashionable circles of Madrid; and on this authority the basest perfidies and the most scandalous intrigues are represented. His cavaliers draw their swords on every trifling occasion; and to inflict a wound, or even death, is a matter of little moment.

Sacred Dramas.

The sacred pieces of Lopé de Vega depict, in very faithful colors, the religious spirit of his times, and in

common with his other works, form an exact picture of the prevailing manners. They are a strange mixture of catholic piety, fantastic imagination, and noble poetry. The lives of the saints possess more dramatic effect than the sacramental acts; but, on the other hand, the religious mysteries in the latter are expressed, by means of the allegories, with greater dignity. Of all the works of Lópé, the lives of the saints are written with the least observance of dramatic rules, exhibiting the most incongruous union of characters. Allegorical personages, buffoons, saints, rustics, scholars, kings, the infant Christ, God the Father, the devil, and all the heterogeneous beings which the most grotesque imagination can conceive, are here made to act and converse together

Tragedies.

All these pieces were known by the general designation of the *Gran Comedia*, or *Comedia famosa*, whether the event is fortunate, comic or tragic. Yet in the edition of his dramatic works which Lópé himself published, are several pieces distinguished by the name of tragedies. Of these, the story was in general borrowed from antiquity; for the author seemed to imagine that no modern action was sufficiently dignified to deserve the title of tragic. But there is nothing to authorize the distinction; for these pieces by Lópé possess neither a grander development, nor deeper emotions, nor a more elevated strain of language than the less pretentious compositions of other writers. Their style is universally the same. The author has endeavored to render it poet-

ical, but not to give it an air of grandeur. He has enriched it with the most brilliant images, and has adorned it by the exercise of his imagination; but he has failed either to dignify it or to give it a uniform elevation. His characters speak like poets, not like men of distinguished rank; and they never preserve the tone in which they commence their conversation. Of the two pieces which properly bear the name of tragedies—*Nero* and *Orpheus*—both must be ranked amongst his very worst productions.

Characteristics of Lope's Drama.

Notwithstanding the harshness and coarseness of style which often mar the dramas of Lope de Vega, it cannot be said that the reader is fatigued by their perusal, that the action flags, or that we feel the impatience and lack of interest so often occasioned by the plays of French authors of inferior rank. Our curiosity is awakened by the rapidity of action, by the multiplicity of events, by the increasing complications, and by the impossibility of foreseeing the development; and these are preserved in all their vivacity from the first scene to the last. His pieces are often open to severe criticism; indeed, they are sometimes even beneath criticism; yet they uniformly excite a desire to discover the event. It is probably to his art of explaining all the circumstances by the acts of his characters that Lope owes this advantage. He always opens his scenes by some imposing incident, which forcibly attracts and captivates the attention of the spectator. His performers

proceed to action as soon as they appear on the stage, and he discloses their characters more fully by their conduct than by a recital of anterior occurrences. Curiosity is awakened by his busy scenes, while we listen mechanically to the recitals which explain the French pieces; and only because they are absolutely requisite in order to understand the play.

In the dramas of Lope, his principal characters are always displayed, and each circumstance developed in its proper place, so that there is no need of any other exposition, while the poet always attracts the eye and commands the attention of his audience, from the commencement. In *The Certain for the Doubtful*, for instance, a drama founded on the jealous rivalry of Don Pedro, king of Castile, and his brother Don Henry, both of whom are enamored of Donna Juana, daughter of the adelantado of Castile, the scene opens in the streets of Seville in the midst of the festivals and rejoicings on the eve of Saint John. The lively strains of musical instruments and of the human voice are heard on every side; dances are made up before the audience; the nobility of the kingdom partake in the diversions of the people, or avail themselves of that opportunity to carry on their intrigues: and at last Don Henry and Don Pedro are introduced in a manner sufficiently striking to awaken general curiosity.

Historic Plays.

In *Poverty is no Crime*, in which the scene is laid in Flanders during the wars of Philip II and under the

government of the count de Fuentes, the opening is in the highest degree attractive and romantic. Rosela, a Flemish lady of noble birth, has retired to her gardens at a short distance from Brussels. She is there attacked by four Spanish soldiers, who, long deprived of their pay and suffering from want, attempt to rob her of her jewels. Mendoza, the hero of the piece, who was serving as a private soldier in the same army, unexpectedly arrives, meanly apparelled. He defends the Flemish lady, recovers her jewels, and conducts her to a place of safety. Having gained her affections by this generous action, he confides to her care his sister, who has accompanied him to Flanders, and then sets forth for the siege of Catelet, with the count de Fuentes.

Lopé de Vega appears to have studied the history of Spain, and to have been filled with noble enthusiasm for the glory of his country, which he incessantly endeavors to support. His dramas cannot be strictly called historical, like those of Shakespeare; that is to say, he has not selected the great events of the state, so as to form a political drama; but he has connected romantic intrigues with the most glorious occurrences in the records of Spain, and has so interwoven romance with history that eulogies on the heroes of his nation become an essential and inseparable part of his poems. It was not to afford the audience the pleasure of witnessing a ridiculous battle, as in the effeminate theatre in Italy, that the siege of Catelet, in which Mendoza distinguished himself, is partly displayed on the stage; it was for the purpose of affording the count de

Fuentes, in arraying his army, the opportunity of rendering to each of his officers, and to each of his brave warriors, that tribute of glory which posterity has accorded to them. Although these pieces are inferior to many others in point of composition, yet the patriotic sentiments of the author, and his zeal for the glory of his nation, give them a deeper interest than is possessed by those which are more distinguished by poetic beauties.

The Law of Honor.

In the faithful pictures of Spanish manners which Lopé has presented to us, the most striking feature is the extreme susceptibility of Spanish honor. The slightest coquetry of a mistress, of a wife or a sister, is an insult to the lover, the husband or the brother, which can only be obliterated by blood. This mad jealousy was communicated to the Spanish by the Arabians. Its existence among the latter, and indeed among all oriental nations, may easily be accounted for, because it is in accordance with their national habits. They keep the female sex in close confinement; they never pronounce their names, nor do they ever seek any intercourse with them until they have them absolutely in their power. Indulging only emotions of love and jealousy in their harems, they seem in every other place to forget the existence of the sex. The manners of the Spaniards were entirely opposite; their whole lives were consecrated to gallantry; every individual was enamored of some woman who was not in his power, and made no scruple of entering into the

most indelicate intrigues to gratify his passions. The most virtuous heroines made assignations in the night-time, at their chamber windows; they received and wrote billets; and they went out masked to meet their lovers in the house of a third person. So completely was this gallantry supported by the spirit of chivalry that, when a married woman was pursued by her husband or by her father, she invoked the first person whom she chanced to meet, without knowing him or disclosing herself to him. She requested him to protect her from her impertinent pursuers, and the stranger thus called upon could not, without dishonoring himself, refuse to draw his sword to procure for this unknown female a liberty perhaps criminal. He, however, who thus hazarded his life to secure the flight of a coquette, who had himself made many assignations and written many love-notes, would be seized with unappeasable fury if he discovered that his own sister had inspired any person with love, had entertained that passion for another, or had taken any of those liberties which are authorized by universal custom. Such a circumstance would be a sufficient motive in his eyes to put to death both his sister and the man who had ventured to speak to her of love.

The theatre of Spain everywhere affords us examples of the practical application of this singular law of honor. Besides various pieces of Lopé de Vega, many of those of Calderon, and among others the *Lady Spectre* and *The Devotion of the Cross*, place in the clearest light the contrast between the jealous fury of a husband or a brother, and the protection which they

themselves afford to any masked damsel who may ask it; who, as it often happens, is one of the identical persons they would have the greatest desire to restrain if they had known her. But the argument which a Castilian philosopher advances against these sanguinary manners in a comedy of an anonymous author of the court of Philip IV is still more extraordinary. A judge is speaking of a husband who has put his wife to death:

Our worldly laws he has obey'd,
But not those laws which God has made.
My other self, now, is my wife;
It is then clear, that if my life
I must not take, I cannot do
That violence to her. 'Tis true,
Man very rarely can control
The impulse which first moves his soul.

A singular morality, which would prohibit murder, only when it resembles suicide!

The Doubtful for the Certain.

In *The Doubtful for the Certain*, by Lopé de Vega, recently revived at Madrid, Donna Juana prefers Don Henry to his brother Pedro, the king, and to him she remains constant in spite of the passion of the monarch, who was neither less amiable, less young, nor less captivating. She endeavors in various ways to make known her attachment to Don Henry; and at last, when the king is on the point of receiving her future husband,

she begs to speak to him alone, hoping to free herself from him by a singular artifice.

Juana.—Don Pedro, I have ventured to confide
In your known valor and your generous wisdom,
To speak with you thus frankly. You must know,
Don Henry did address me, and I answer'd
His suit, though with a grave and modest carriage.
Never from him heard I unfitting words;
Never from him did I receive a line
Trenching upon mine honor; yet, believe me,
If I have answer'd not your love, I have
A deeper motive than you think of. Listen!
But no! how can I tell such circumstances,
And yet the hazard only may be blamed—
Doth not my cheek grow pale?

The King.—Oh, I am lost!

Juana, I am lost! my love begets
A thousand strange chimeras. What shall I
Believe of this thy treachery—of thy honor?
Oh speak; nor longer torture me; I know
The hazards wherewith lovers are environed.

Jua.—I seek choice words, and the disguise of rhetoric,
And yet the simple truth will best excuse me.
I and Don Henry—he was speaking to me—
Descended the great staircase of the palace—
I cannot tell it—will you let me write it?

The K.—No, tarry not, my patience is exhausted.

Jua.—I said we did descend the staircase.—No,
Not the doom'd criminal can be more moved
Than I am at this tale.

The K.—In God's name, hasten!

Jua.—Wait a little while.

The K.—You torture me.

Jua.—Nay, I will tell you all.

My blood creeps through each artery drop by drop.

The K.—Oh, end this tale!

Jua.—Alas! my lord, my crime was very light.

Well, Henry then approach'd me.

The K.—Well! and then?

Jua.—His mouth ('twas by some fatal accident)

Met mine. Perchance he only sought to speak;

But in the obscurity of night he did

Unwittingly do this discourtesy.

Now, then, you know the hidden fatal reason

Why I can never be your wife.

The K.—I know,

Juana, that this tale is the mere coinage

Of your own brain. I know, too, that Don Henry

Hath not yet sought his exile, that he lingers

In Seville, plotting how to injure me.

I know that they will say it ill becomes

One of my rank to struggle for your love;

That wise men, and that fools will all agree

In telling me I have forgot my honor.

But I am wounded. Jealousy and love

Have blinded me; I equally despise

The wise man and the fool, and only seek

To satisfy the injury I feel.

Vengeance exists not undebased with fury,

Nor love untainted by the breath of folly.

This night will I assassinate Don Henry,

And he being dead, I will espouse thee. Then

Thou never canst compare his love with mine.

'Tis true that while he lives I can't espouse thee,

Seeing that my dishonor lives in him

Who hath usurp'd the place reserved for me;

But, while I thus avenge this crime, I feel

That it hath no reality, and yet

Though thine adventure be all false invented

To make me yield my wishes and renounce

My marriage, it suffices that it hath

Been only told to me, to seal my vengeance:

Or if love makes me credit aught of it,

Henry shall die, and I shall wed his widow;

Then, though the tale thou tellest were discover'd,

Thine honor and mine own will be uninjured.

It is neither a tyrant nor a madman who speaks. Don Pedro resolves to commit fratricide, not like a monster, but like a Spaniard, delicate upon the point of honor. He dispatches assassins by different routes to discover his brother. In the meantime, Don Henry marries Juana, and the king, when he thus finds the evil without remedy and his honor unimpaired, pardons the two lovers.

Revival of the Drama.

But less for his own account than as exhibiting the spirit of his age, and as exercising a powerful influence on succeeding generations, does Lopé de Vega deserve the honors accorded to him, not only by his own countrymen but by all real lovers of the drama. After a long interruption to dramatic art, and a silence of fifteen centuries in the theatres of Greece and Rome, Europe was suddenly surprised with the renewal of theatrical representations, and turned to them with delight. In every quarter the drama now revived; the eyes as well as the mind sought gratification in the charms of poetry, and genius was required to give to its creations action and life. In Italy tragedy had been already cultivated by Trissino, Rucellai and their imitators, during the whole of the sixteenth century, but without obtaining any brilliant success or attracting the admiration of the spectators, and it was only during the period which corresponds to the life of Lopé de Vega—1562-1635—that the first dramatic attempts of which Italy has reason to boast before those of Alfieri made their appear-

ance. The *Amyntas* of Tasso was published in 1572; the *Pastor Fido* in 1585; and the crowd of pastoral dramas which seemed to be the only representation adapted to the national taste of a people deprived of their independence, and of all military glory, were composed in the years which preceded or immediately followed the commencement of the seventeenth century. In England, Shakespeare was born two years after Lopé de Vega, and died nineteen years before him. His splendid genius raised the English theatre, which had its birth only a few years before, from a state of extreme barbarism, and bestowed on it the chief renown which it possesses. In France, even before the birth of Lopé, Jodelle had given to French tragedy the rules and the spirit which she has preserved in her maturity. Garnier, who was the first to polish it, was a contemporary of Lopé. The great Corneille, born in 1606, and Rotrou, born in 1609, attained to manhood before his death. Rotrou had, indeed, before that event given eleven or twelve pieces to the theatre; but Corneille did not publish the *Cid* until a year after the decease of the great Spanish dramatist.

In the midst of this universal devotion to dramatic poetry, we may well imagine the astonishment and surprise produced by one who seemed desirous of satisfying in himself the theatrical wants of all the world; one whose genius was never exhausted in startling and ingenious invention; who produced comedies in verse with more ease than others wrote sonnets, and who, while the Castilian tongue was in vogue, filled at one and the same moment, with pieces of endless variety,

all the theatres of the Spanish dominions, and those of Milan, Naples, Vienna, Munich and Brussels. The influence which he could not win from his age by the polish of his works, he obtained by their number. He exhibited the dramatic art as he had conceived it, in so many different manners, and under so many forms, to so many thousands of spectators, that he naturalized and established a preference for his style, gave direction to Spanish genius in dramatic art, and obtained over the foreign stage a very considerable influence. It is felt in the plays of Shakespeare and of his immediate successors; and is to be traced in Italy during the seventeenth century, but more particularly in France, where the mighty Corneille formed himself on the Spanish school, where Rotrou, Quinault, Thomas Corneille, Scarron and others, gave to the theatre scarcely any other than pieces borrowed from Spain, and where Castilian names and titles and manners were long in exclusive possession of the boards.

The works of Lopé de Vega are seldom read, more rarely translated, and are very infrequently met with even in detached collections of Spanish plays. The original edition of his pieces is to be found only in two or three of the most celebrated libraries in Europe. It is, therefore, necessary to regard somewhat closely a man who attained such eminent fame; who exercised so powerful and durable an influence not only over his native country but over all Europe, and over ourselves; yet with whom we have little acquaintance except by name. If extracts from pieces, often rudely sketched, may not interest those who seek only the masterpieces of litera-

ture, and care not for its rude materials; if the prodigious fertility of Lopé is no merit in the eyes of those who are readily fatigued with details; yet he deserves our attention as presenting a brilliant picture of the manners and opinions then prevalent in Spain. Nowhere else can we trace so clearly the prejudices and manners of the Spaniards, their conduct in America and their religious sentiments at an epoch which, in some measure, corresponds to the wars of the League. Here is set forth the character of a nation which, at that time, was armed for the conquest of the world, and which, after having long held the destinies of France in the balance, seemed on the point of reducing her under its yoke, and forcing her to receive its opinions, its laws, its manners and its religion.

The Life of the Valiant Céspedes.

A remarkable feature in all the chivalrous dramas of Spain is indifference to the commission of murder. There is hardly a single play of Lopé de Vega which does not discover in the national character a disregard for the life of others and a criminal indifference to evil, coupled with a certain admiration of men celebrated for their many homicides. Of this, among hundreds of other instances, there is a good example in the comedy entitled *The Life of the Valiant Céspedes*. It transports us to the camp of Charles V, shows us how those armies were composed which destroyed the Protestants and shook the German empire, and forms, in some sort, an historical picture of this reign, so remarkable in the

revolutions of Europe, by acquainting us with the character and private life of men whom we are accustomed to regard only in the mass.

It would be difficult to bring within the compass of a single play a greater number of murders and seductions, most of the former gratuitously perpetrated. How fatal must have been the effect of exhibiting to a people already prone to deeds of blood a character like Cespedes and representing him as the hero of his country! But there are many pieces still more dangerous. Violence in conflict with social order, and a sanguinary resistance to magistrates, corregidores and officers of justice have been too often displayed as the favorite form of heroism on the Spanish stage. Long before the robbers of Schiller appeared; long before the advent of chiefs of banditti in our melodramas, the Castilians had reserved all virtue, valor and nobility of mind as the special property of their outlaws. Many of the plays of the two great Spanish dramatists, Lope de Vega and Calderon, have such a chieftain as their principal character, while inferior authors frequently chose their heroes from the same class. It is thus that *The Valiant Andalusian* of Christoval de Monroy y Silva, *The Redoubtable Andalusian* of a writer of Valencia and *The Robber Balthasar* of another anonymous author excited the interest of the spectators for a professed assassin, who executed the bloody commands of his relations and friends; who, pursued by justice, resisted the officers of a whole province, and left dead on the spot all who dared to approach him, and who, when the moment of submission at length arrived, obtained the divine pardon through the mirac-

ulous interposition of Providence, a prodigy which snatched him from the hands of his enemies, or, at all events, assured the salvation of his soul.

Plays of this description met with the most brilliant success. Neither the charm of poetry, so prodigally lavished in other dramas, nor the art of preserving probability in the plot were demanded, so long as the wondrous valor of the robber chief, and his still more wonderful successes, enchanted the populace. This was a glory of heroism appropriate to their own sphere of life, though one which it was highly important to suppress. In the literature of southern Europe we are often struck with the subversion of morals, the corruption of all just principles, and the general disorganization of society which it indicates; but if we candidly examine the institutions of the people, and consider their government, their religion, their education, their games and their public amusements, we ought rather to allow them credit for the virtues which they have retained, for not losing entirely the rectitude of sentiment and thought which is innate in the heart of man.

Conquest of Arauco.

Principles as evil in tendency, precepts as cruel, and fanaticism no less deplorable are met with in Lope's *Conquest of Arauco*, though in this instance the piece is marked by a high strain of poetry, as well as supported by a lively interest. The subject is taken from the *Araucana* of Alonzo de Ercilla, and it commences after the election of Caupolican and his defeat of Val-

divia, the Spanish general who commanded in Chili, and who perished in battle about 1554. The struggle between the Spaniards, who combat for glory and for the establishment of their religion, and the Araucanians, who fight for liberty, affords room for the development of the noblest characters and for the most striking contrasts between a savage and civilized people. It is this contrast that forms one of the greatest beauties in Voltaire's *Alzire*, which deals with the same legend. Many of the scenes in Lopé's version are richer in poetry than anything else that he has composed. Doubtless, they would have been more impressive had they been more impartial, but the Araucans were enemies of the Spaniards, and the author considered that patriotism required him to give them a boasting character and to represent them as defeated in every action. Nevertheless, the general impression is one of admiration for the vanquished and horror at the cruelty of the conquerors.

While the Spaniards are installing the new governor of Chili, Caupolican celebrates his victory and places his trophies at the feet of the beautiful Fresia, who, no less valiant than himself, is delighted at finding in her lover the liberator of his country. The following, from the opening scene, is a fair specimen of what the author can do in the way of amorous poetry:

Caupolican.—Here, beauteous Fresia, rest;

Thy feather'd darts resign,

While the bright planet pours a farewell ray,

Gilding the glorious West,

And, as his beams decline,

Tinges with crimson light the expiring day.

Lo! where the streamlet on its way,
Soft swelling from its source,
Through flower-bespangled meads
Its murmuring waters leads,
And in the ocean ends its gentle course.
Here, Fresia, may'st thou lave
Thy limbs, whose whiteness shames the foaming wave.
Unfold, in this retreat,
Thy beauties, envied by the queen of night;
The gentle stream shall clasp thee in its arms;
Here bathe thy wearied feet!
The flowers with delight
Shall stoop to dry them, wondering at thy charms.
The trees a verdant shade shall lend;
From many a songster's throat
That swell the harmonious note;
The cool stream to thy form shall bend
Its course, and the enamored sands
Shall yield thee diamonds for thy beauteous hands.
All that thou see'st around,
My Fresia, is thine own!
This realm of Chill is thy noble dower!
Chased from our sacred ground,
The Spaniard shall for all his crimes atone,
And Charles' and Philip's iron reign is o'er.

Fresia.—Lord of my soul, my bosom's dream,
To thee yon mountains bend
Their proud aspiring heads;
The nymphs that haunt this stream,
With roses crown'd, their arms extend,
And yield thee offerings from their flowery beds.
But ah! no verdant tree that spreads
Its blissful shade, no fountain pure,
Nor feather'd choir, whose song
Echoes the woods among,
Earth, sea nor empire, gold nor silver ore,
Could ever to me prove
So rich a treasure as my chieftain's love.
I ask no brighter fame
Than conquest o'er a heart

To whom proud Spain submits her laurel'd head.
 Thy spear hath rent the chain
 That bound our Indian soil;
 Her yoke so burthen'd by th' oppressor's hand,
 Thou hast spurn'd with fierce disdain:
 Hast robb'd the spoiler of his spoil,
 Who sought by craft and force to subjugate thy land!

When the Indians are aware that the Spaniards are advancing to attack them, and that their god has revealed their approaching defeat, the warriors and their chiefs animate themselves for the combat by a warlike hymn of a very original character. Its effect depends in a great measure on that which precedes it, and on the grandeur of the scene and the music. At the extremity of the stage the Spaniards are seen on the ramparts of a fort, where they have sheltered themselves. The Indian tribes surround their chiefs, each one in turn menacing with vengeance the enemies of his country; the chiefs reply in chorus, and the army interrupts the warlike music by its acclamations, saluting its leader with the utmost enthusiasm.

An Indian Soldier.—Hail, Chief! twice crown'd by Victory's hands,

Victor o'er all Valdivia's bands,
 Conqueror of Villagran.

The Army.—All hail, Caupolican!

Chorus of Chiefs.—Mendoza's fall will add fresh wreaths again.

Fall, tyrant, fall,
 Th' avenger comes, alike of gods and men.

The Sol.—The God of Ind, Apo the thunderer, comes,
 Who gave his valiant tribes these vast domains;
 Spoil'd by the robbers from the ocean-plains,

Soon, soon, to fill ignoble tombs,
Slain by the conqueror of Villagran.

The Army.—Shout, shout, Caupolican!

The Cho.—The hero's eye is on thee; tyrant, fly!
No, thou art in his toils and thou must die,
Thou canst not fly,
Thou and thine impious clan.

The Army.—Hear, hear, Caupolican!

Caupolican.—Wretched Castilians yield,—our victims, yield;
Fate sits upon our arms;
Trust not these walls and towers,—they cannot shield
Your heads from vengeance now,
Your souls from wild alarms.

The Cho.—See laurels on his brow,
The threatening chief of Araucan.

The Army.—Caupolican!

The Cho.—Mendoza cast your laurels at his feet;
With tyrant-homage greet,
The chief of all his clan.

Tucapel.—Bandits, whom treason and the cruel thirst
Of yellow dust bore to our hapless shores,
Who boast of honor while your hands are curs'd
With chains and tortures Nature's self deplores,
Behold, we burst your iron yoke;
Your terrors fled, your savage bondage broke.

The Cho.—Behold the victor of your Villagran.

The whole Army.—Caupolican! Caupolican!

A number of battles succeed each other, in which the Indians, though they yield to the superior arms of the Europeans, yet never lose their courage. Their wives and children excite them to battle, and force them to combat when they seem willing to lend an ear to negotiation. At length Galvarino, one of the chiefs of the Araucans, is made prisoner, and Mendoza orders his

hands to be cut off, and directs him to be sent back in that state to his countrymen. Galvarino, on hearing this cruel sentence, thus replies to Mendoza:

What is thine aim, conquest or chastisement?
Though thou lop off these hands, yet still among
Arauca's sons shall myriads yet be found
To blast thy hopes; and as the husbandman
Heads the fast-budding maize, to increase his store
Of golden grain, so even these crimson hands
Thou sever'st from my valiant arms, shall yield
A thousand fold; for when the earth hath drunk
My blood, an iron harvest she shall yield
Of hostile hands, to enslave and bind thine own.

The execution of the sentence does not take place on the stage, but Alonzo de Ercilla, the epic poet, who acts an important part in this drama, brings the report of it:

He seem'd to me all marble; scarce the knife
With cruel edge had sever'd his left hand,
Than he replaced it with his valiant right.

Galvarino arrives at a council of war of the Araucans, at the moment when the Caciques, being now dispirited, are on the point of concluding a peace. The sight of his mutilated arms kindles their rage afresh. Galvarino himself urges them in an eloquent harangue to avenge themselves, or to die in defense of their freedom; and another war is commenced, but with still less success than the former one. The Araucans, reassembled in the wood of Puren, celebrate a festival in honor of their deity. A female in the midst of them chants a beauti-

ful ode to the mother of Love, when they are on a sudden surprised by the Spaniards, who attack them with shouts of *San Jago* and *Cierra Espana*—their ancient war-cry. The Indians are nearly all slain; but Caupolican, overpowered by numbers, is at length made prisoner, and brought before Mendoza :

Mendoza.—What power hath thus reduced Caupolican?

Caupolican.—Misfortune and the fickle chance of war.

Men.—Misfortune is the just reward of all
That war with heaven. Thou wast a vassal to
The crown of Spain and dar'dst defy its power.

Cau.—Free-born, I have to the uttermost defended
My native land, her liberty and laws.
Yours have I ne'er attempted.

Men.—To our arms
Chili had soon submitted, hadst not thou resisted.

Cau.—Now she falls, and fetters bind
Their hands.

Men.—Through thee Valdivia perish'd; thou
Hast destroy'd cities, hast excited war,
Hast led thy people to revolt, hast slain
Our Villagran, and for him thou shalt die.

Cau.—'Tis true, my life is in thine hands; revenge
Thy monarch, trample Chili in the dust,
Yet with this life thy power o'er me must end

The poet, however, to complete the triumph of Spain, was resolved on the conversion of the hero of the Araucans, and Caupolican embraces the religion of Mendoza, persuaded that his conqueror, more experienced and enlightened than himself, must be nearer to the true faith. Mendoza, after appearing as his godfather at the bap-

tism, abandons him to the executioner. He is seen on the scaffold, bound to a stake, and ready to be delivered to the flames, and Mendoza, addressing himself to a portrait of Philip II, exclaims:

Thus do we serve thee, Sire, and these rich plains,
Sate with Indian blood, we add to thy domains.

One would imagine that the noble character given to Galvarino and Caupolican, the revolting punishment of a hero at the moment of his conversion, and the senseless reproach of insurrection addressed to an independent nation which merely attempts to repel invasion, were designedly placed before the eyes of the Castilians to inspire them with a horror of their cruelties. But such was not the author's intention. Thoroughly persuaded that the partition of the Indies by the pope had invested his sovereign with the dominion of America, he sincerely regarded the Araucans as rebels deserving of punishment; and, equally convinced that Christianity ought to be established by fire and sword, he shared with his whole heart in the zeal of the conquerors of America, whom he considered as soldiers of the faith. Moreover, he deemed the sacrifice of a hundred thousand idolatrous Indians as an offering highly acceptable to the Deity. The partiality of Spanish poets for their own nation is in general so great that they think it unnecessary to disguise the cruelty of its conduct toward those whom they have subjugated. That which is at this day so revolting to us in their history, was in their eyes a peculiar merit, and if Lopé excited a passing

interest in the heroism of Caupolican and his Indians, it was only for the purpose of exalting the virtues of the Valdivias, the Villagrans and the Mendozas. In this, moreover, he does but repeat the sentiments of those so-called heroes who dragged the banner of the cross through the blood of myriads of innocent victims, as they bore westward the glad tidings of Christianity.

Sacred Comedies.

The sacred pieces of Lopé de Vega, which form a very considerable part of his works, are in general so immoral and extravagant that, if we were to judge the poet after these alone, they would impress us with a very poor idea of his genius. It would be difficult to imagine anything more eccentric as a dramatic composition than the *Life of St. Nicholas of Tolentino*, of which Bouterwek has given an analysis. It commences with a conversation among a number of gay young students, one of whom is the future saint, already distinguished for his piety amid this libertine assembly. The devil, under disguise, mingles with the company; a spectre appears in the air, the heavens open, and God the Father is seen seated in judgment with Justice and Mercy, who solicit Him in turns. This imposing spectacle is followed by a love-scene between a lady named Rosalia and her lover, Feniso. The embryo saint, already a canon, preaches a sermon on the stage; his parents congratulate themselves on possessing such a son, and this concludes the first act. The second commences with a scene in which soldiers appear; the saint

arrives with some monks, and delivers a prayer in form of a sonnet. Brother Peregrine narrates his conversion as wrought by love; a subtle theological dispute succeeds; all the events of the life of the saint are reviewed; he prays a second time, and he is raised by his faith into the air, where the Virgin and St. Augustine descend to meet him. In the third act the holy winding-sheet is shown at Rome by two cardinals, and Nicholas assumes the habit of his order. During the ceremony the angels form an invisible choir; the devil is attracted by the music, and tempts the holy man, while souls are seen in the fire of purgatory. The devil retires surrounded by lions and serpents, but a monk exorcises him jestingly with a basin of holy water. The saint, now sufficiently tried, descends from heaven in a mantle spangled with stars: as soon as he touches the earth a rock opens; his father and mother ascend out of purgatory through the chasm, and he takes them by the hand and returns with them to heaven.

The *Life of St. Diego of Alcala* is sufficiently extravagant, though less so than the *St. Nicholas*. There are no allegorical personages, and no supernatural beings except a few angels and the devil, who robs Diego of some turnips, which he had himself stolen to distribute to the poor. Diego is a poor peasant, who attaches himself as a domestic to a hermit. Ignorant and humble, endowed with tender and amiable feelings, he displays many attractive qualities. When he culls the flowers to adorn a chapel, he asks their forgiveness for snatching them from their sylvan abode, and exhibits the same respect for the lives of animals, and for all the works

of the Creator. But he breaks at pleasure all bonds of relationship among those with whom God had placed him; he flies from the paternal roof without taking leave of his father or his mother, and he abandons even the old hermit, whom he served, without bidding him adieu. He enters as a brother into the Order of St. Francis, the habit of which he earnestly asks for, and notwithstanding his ignorance, the sanctity of Diego strikes the Franciscans so powerfully that they choose him for the keeper of their convent, and afterward send him as a missionary to convert the inhabitants of the Fortunate islands. He disembarks on the shore of the Canaries with a handful of soldiers while the natives are celebrating a festival, and thinks himself called on to begin the work of conversion with a massacre of the infidel inhabitants. The moment he beholds men whom from their clothing alone he recognizes as strangers to his faith, he rushes on them exclaiming, "This cross shall serve for a sword," encourages his men to slay them, and sheds bitter tears when he observes the Spaniards, instead of relying on the succor and interference of heaven, measuring with a worldly prudence the strength of their enemy, and refusing to attack a warlike and powerful people, who were wise enough to carry their arms even in a time of peace. On his return to Spain, Diego robs the garden, the kitchen and pantry of his convent, in order to relieve the poor. The principal monk surprises him in the act, and insists on seeing what he carried in his gown, but the meat which he had stolen is miraculously changed into a garland of roses. At length he dies, and the whole convent is instantly

filled with sweet perfume, while the air resounds with angelic music.

Autos Sacramentales.

However eccentric these compositions may be, we can readily imagine that the people were delighted with them. Supernatural beings, transformations and prodigies, were constantly presented to their eyes; their curiosity was the more vividly excited, as in the miraculous course of events it was impossible to predict what would next appear, and every improbability was removed by faith, which always came to the aid of the poet, with an injunction to believe what could not be explained. But the Autos Sacramentales of Lopé seem less calculated to please the crowd. They are infinitely more simple in their construction, and are mingled with a theology which the people would find it difficult to comprehend.

The greater part of these allegorical pieces are formed of long theological dialogues, dissertations and scholastic subtleties too tedious for perusal. But before the representation of an auto, and as if to indemnify the audience for the more serious attention about to be required of them, a loa or prologue, equally allegorical, and at the same time mingled with comedy, was first performed. After the auto, or between the acts, appeared an intermediate piece, entirely burlesque, and taken from common life; so that a religious feast never terminated without gross pleasantries and a humorous performance; as if a higher degree of devotion in the principal drama required, by way of compen-

sation, a greater degree of licentiousness in the minor parts.

All the dramas of Lopé are founded on real incidents which require study and a certain adherence to tradition. When these incidents are drawn from the history of Spain, they are treated with truth and fidelity as to manners and facts. But as the majority of Spanish comedies are of an heroic cast, and as combats, dangers and political revolutions are mingled with domestic events, the poet could not assign them to a particular time or place. The Spaniards, therefore, gave themselves full license to create imaginary kingdoms and countries; for to a great portion of Europe they were entire strangers, and they founded principalities and subverted empires at will. Especially Poland, Hungary and Macedonia, as well as the regions of the North, are countries always at their disposal for the purpose of introducing brilliant catastrophes on the stage. Neither the poet nor the spectators having any knowledge of the rulers of such countries, it was an easy matter at a time of so little historical accuracy to give birth to kings and heroes never noticed in history. It was in one of these imaginary realms that Francisco de Roxas placed his *Father, who could not be King*, from which Rotrou formed his Venceslas. It was in another that Lopé de Vega gave full reins to his imagination when he represents a female fugitive charitably entertained in the house of a poor gentleman of the Carpathian mountains, bringing him as her portion the crown of Hungary, in *The Unlooked-for Good-fortune*. In still another, the supposed son of a gardener, changed into

a hero by the love of a princess, merits and obtains by his exploits the throne of Macedon.

Though inexhaustible in intrigues and interesting situations, Lopé is very far from being a perfect dramatist; but no single poet has brought together richer materials for the use of those who may be capable of employing them. In such of his comedies as are pure invention, he possesses an advantage which he frequently loses in historical pieces. While the characters are better drawn and better supported, there is greater probability in the events, more unity in the action, and also in the time and place; for, drawing all from himself, he has only taken what was useful to him, instead of thinking himself obliged to introduce into his composition all that history presented. The early French dramatists borrowed largely from Lopé and his school; but the mine is yet far from being exhausted, and there is still to be found a great number of subjects susceptible of being brought within the requirements of the French drama. Corneille took his heroic play, *Don Sancho of Aragon*, from a piece of Lopé de Vega, entitled *El Palacio Confuso*; and this single piece might still furnish another theatrical subject entirely different, many of the pieces of this fertile writer sufficing for two or three plays. Wonderful, indeed, is the richness of imagination displayed by this man, whose labors seem so far to surpass the limit of human endurance. Of a life of seventy-two years' duration, fifty were devoted incessantly to literary work; and he was, moreover, a soldier, a priest, and a familiar of the Inquisition. In order to have written, as he did, 2,200 theatrical pieces,

he must have given to the public a new play of about 3,000 verses every week of his life, and in that week he must not only have found the time necessary for invention and unity, but also for making the historical researches into customs and manners on which his play is founded; to consult Tacitus, for example, in order to compose his *Nero*; while he must also find leisure to compose twenty-one quarto volumes of poetry, among which are five epic poems.

The example of this extraordinary man gave birth to a multitude of plays of similar character, as his success gave encouragement to scores of dramatists in all parts of Spain, who composed with the same unbridled imagination, the same carelessness, and the same rapidity, but not with the genius of the great master. Of some of them mention will be made in connection with the works of Calderon, the most celebrated of his scholars and rivals. There is one, indeed, who cannot well be separated from Lopé. This is Juan Perez de Montalvan, his favorite pupil, his friend, biographer, and imitator. Full of talent and fire, and with unbounded admiration for Lopé, he took him for his exclusive model, and in his short life of six-and-thirty years wrote more than one hundred pieces, dividing his time, as did Lopé, between poetry and the business of the Inquisition, of which he was a notary. His works contain in almost every line traces of the religious zeal and fanaticism which led him to become a member of that dread tribunal.

IV.

Poetry and Drama at the Close of the Seventeenth Century.

The poetry of Spain had, like the nation to which it belonged, a chivalric origin. The first poets were warriors, who celebrated by turns their mistresses and their own exploits, and who preserved in their verses the rude sincerity and frankness of manners, the independence, stormy liberty, the jealous and passionate love, of which their life was composed. Their songs attract us from the poetical atmosphere into which chivalry transports us, but more from their reality and truth, the intimate connection of words with the heart, which does not allow us to suspect any imitation, any borrowed sentiment, or any affectation. But the Spanish nation experienced a fatal change when it became subject to the house of Austria; and poetry suffered with the rest, or at least felt the evil effects in the succeeding generation. Charles V subverted the liberties of the Spaniards, annihilated their rights and privileges, tore the people from their homes and engaged them in wars, not for their country, but for his own political interests. He destroyed their native dignity of character, and substituted for it a false pride and empty show. Philip, his

son, who presumed himself a Spaniard, and who is considered as such, did not possess the character of the nation, but of its monks, such as the severity of their order developed in convents. Thus, many years of oppression and misrule rendered the Spaniards at the same time imperious and servile, false, self-opinionated, cruel and voluptuous. Yet these vices were by no means inherent, but rather the effects of the strict discipline of the convents, the prostration of the intellect, the subjugation of will and the concentration of all the passions in one alone, which was deified.

The Reign of the Philips.

Philip II, without either talents or virtues worthy of his high office, bore a greater affinity to Cardinal Ximenes than to the Spanish nation, which had revolted against this imperious and cruel minister, but had eventually succumbed to his violence and artifice. To an unbounded ambition and a shameful perfidy, to a savage disregard of the miseries of war and famine, and the scourges of all kinds which he brought upon his dominions, Philip II joined a sanguinary religion, which led him to consider as an expiation of his other crimes, the newest and greatest crime of the Inquisition. His subjects, like himself educated by the monks, had already changed their character, and were become worthy instruments of his dark politics and his superstition. They distinguished themselves in the wars with France, Italy and Germany as much by their perfidy as by their religious intolerance. Literature, which always follows,

though at a distance, the political changes of nations, received a character much less natural and profound, exaggeration assuming the place of sentiment, and fanaticism of piety. The reigns of Philip III and Philip IV were still more degrading to the Spanish nation. That vast monarchy, exhausted by gigantic efforts, continued her wars on a still larger scale, only to experience constant reverses of fortune. The king, sunk in vice and effeminacy, did not, however, in the impenetrable security of his palace, lay aside his perfidy, his venality and ambition. His ministers sold the favor of the crown to the highest bidder; the nobility were debased under the yoke of favorites and upstarts; the people were ruined by cruel extortions; a million and a half of Moors had perished by fire and distress, or had been driven into exile by Philip III; Holland, Portugal, Catalonia, Naples and Palermo had revolted; and the clergy, joining their despotic influence to that of the ministers, not only resisted the reform of existing abuses, but endeavored to stifle every voice raised in complaint against them. Any unorthodox sentiment on politics or religion, if only a whispered thought, was punished as a crime; and while, under every other despotism, actions alone and the exterior manifestations of opinion were visited by authority, in Spain the monks sought to proscribe liberal ideas even in the asylum of the conscience.

Such are the effects which these reigns, so degrading to humanity, had on the literature of the age, stifling its higher development, although this epoch is by no means the most barren in letters. The human mind

retains for a long period any impulse it may have received, and it is long before it can be reduced to a state of stagnation in its imprisoned mansion. It will accommodate itself rather than perish; and it sometimes sheds radiance even on a period when it has lost its just direction and fallen far from truth. Among the poets who wrote about the close of the sixteenth and the opening of the seventeenth century, we shall still find many of real merit, however corrupted in their taste by their contemporaries and their government. It was not until the middle of the seventeenth century that the nation wholly fell into decline; and its lethargic slumbers lasted till the middle of the eighteenth.

Moorish Influence.

The Spaniards, as we have seen, inherited from the Moors a forced, pompous and inflated manner. They devoted themselves with ardor, from their first cultivation of letters, to the figurative style of the East, and their own character seemed in this respect to partake of that of the Asiatics. Before the conquests of the latter, all the Latin writers in Spain had exhibited, like Seneca, an inflated diction and a great affectation of sentiment. Even Lopé de Vega was deeply tainted with these defects. With the astonishing fertility of his genius, he found it more easy to adorn his poetry with conceits, and with daring and extravagant images, than to reflect on the propriety of his expressions, and to temper his imagination with reason and good taste. His example diffused among the poets of Spain a style of writing

which seemed to harmonize with their character—that which Marini at the same time adopted in Italy. Marini, born in Naples, but of a Spanish family, and educated among the Spaniards, was the first to communicate to Italy the affectation and false taste which was already observable in the early poetry of Juan de Mena. The school of the Seicentisti, or writers of the sixteenth century, which he had formed, was afterward introduced into Spain, and produced there in a much greater degree than in Italy the pretentious and pedantic form of expression which destroyed all taste; but in both countries the cause of this change is attributable to a higher source, and was the same in both. The poets had, in fact, preserved their genius, though they had lost their freedom of sentiment; they had retained the powers of imagination without any true direction for its exercise; and their faculties, which no longer derived support from each other, or harmonized together, exhausted themselves in the only path which was left open to them.

Gongora and His School.

The chief of this fantastic and affected school, who fixed its style, and who was desirous of forming a new epoch in art by a more refined culture, as he expressed it, was Luis Gongora de Argote, a man of great talent, but who, by his subtlety and perverted taste, greatly impaired the value of his work. He had, moreover, to struggle with misfortune and poverty. Born at Cordova in 1561, an elaborate course of study had not procured for him employment; and it was not until after he

had waited on the court for eleven years that he obtained a small benefice with the utmost difficulty. His discontent produced in him a vein of invective which was long the principal merit of his verses, and his satirical sonnets are excessively caustic, as we may perceive by the following, on the mode of life in Madrid:

Circean cup, and Epicurus' sty;
 Vast broods of harpies fattening on our purse;
 Empty pretensions that can only nurse
 Vexation; spies who swear the air will lie;
 Processions, lackeys, footmen mounted high,
 Coaching the way; new fashions always worse,
 A thousand modes,—with unflesh'd swords, the curse
 Of citizens, not foes;—loquacity
 Of female tongues; impostures of all kind,
 From courts to cabarets; lies made for sale,
 Lawyers, priests riding mules, less obstinate;
 Snares, miry ways, heroes lame, halting, blind;
 Titles and flatteries, shifting with each gale;
 Such is Madrid, this hell of worldly state.

His success was still greater in burlesque satires, in the form of romances or songs. In these his language and versification exhibited precision and clearness, and the natural expression did not betray any affinity to the affected school which he afterward adopted. It was by cool reflection, and not in the warmth of an imagination still young, that he invented for poetry what he considered a more elevated strain, which he denominated the cultivated style. To this end he formed, with the utmost labor and research, a language at once affected, obscure, ridiculously allegorical and totally at variance with the

common manner of speaking and writing. He endeavored, moreover, to introduce into the Spanish language the boldest innovations from the Greek and Latin; he invented a new punctuation to assist in explaining the sense of his verses, and sought for the most uncommon words, or altered the sense of those already in use, to give new attraction to his poetry. At the same time he carefully consulted mythology in order to add fresh ornaments to his language. It was under such influences that he wrote his *Soledades*, his *Polyphemus* and some other poems, all fictions without poetic charm, full of mythological conceits, and loaded with a pomp of fanciful and obscure phrases. Gongora's lot in life was not ameliorated by the celebrity which he thus obtained. He survived some time longer in poverty; and when he died, in 1627, he was no more than a titular chaplain to the king.

Gongora's *Soledades*.

It is extremely difficult to give a just idea of the style of Gongora; nor is it easy to translate it; for other languages do not admit of those labyrinthine phrases, in which the sense is difficult to follow. The following is from the opening of the first of his *Soledades*, by which word he means the solitude of the forest, devoting to this subject two poems, each containing about a thousand verses:

'Twas in that flowery season of the year,
When fair Europa's spoiler in disguise,
(On his fierce front, his glittering arms, arise
A half-moon's horns, while the sun's rays appear

Brightening his speckled coat)—the pride of heaven,
Pastured on stars amidst the sapphire fields;
When he, most worthy of the office given
To Ida's boy—to hold Jove's cup that yields
Immortal juice—was wreck'd in savage sea;
Confiding to the waves his amorous pains;
The sea, relenting, sends the strains
To the far leafy groves, glad to repeat
Echoes than old Arion's shell more sweet.

Polyphemus.

The *Polyphemus* of Gongora is one of his most celebrated poems, and the one which has been most frequently imitated. The Castilian poets of this period were persuaded that neither interest nor genius, sentiment nor thought, were any part of poetry, and that the end of the art was solely the union of harmony with the most brilliant images, and with the riches of ancient mythology. Hence they sought for subjects which might furnish them with gigantic pictures, with strong contrasts, and with all the aid of fable. The loves of Polyphemus appeared to them a singularly happy subject, since they could there unite tenderness and affright, gentleness and horror. The original poem of Gongora consists of sixty-three octave stanzas, and this was certainly enough; but the commentary of Sabredo has swelled it into a quarto volume. In the literature of Spain and Portugal we find at least a dozen or fifteen epic and dramatic poems on this theme. Two or three stanzas will here suffice, and these are from that which has served as a model for all others:

Cyclops—terrific son of Ocean's God!—
Like a vast mountain rose his living frame;
His single eye cast like a flame abroad
Its glances, glittering as the morning beam:
A mighty pine supported where he trod
His giant steps, a trembling twig for him,
Which sometimes served to walk with, or to drive
His sheep to pasture, where the sea-nymphs live.

His jet-black hair in wavy darkness hung,
Dark as the tides of the Lethean deep,
Loose to the winds, and shaggy masses clung
To his dread face; like a wild torrent's sweep,
His beard far down his rugged bosom flung
A savage veil; while scarce the massy head
Of ropy ringlets his vast hands divide,
That floated like the briny waters wide.

Not mountainous Trinacria ever gave
Such fierce and unform'd savage to the day;
Swift as the winds his feet, to chase or brave
The forest hordes, whose battle is his play,
Whose spoils he bears; o'er his vast shoulders wave
Their variegated skins, wont to dismay
The shepherds and their flocks. And now he came
Driving his herds to fold 'neath the still twilight beam.

The translation has rather softened than overcharged the metaphors; yet it was these overdrawn similes which were admired as the true sublimity of the poet and the highest production of genius. Polyphemus, after having expressed his passion and vainly solicited Galatea, furiously assails with fragments of rock the grotto whither she had retired with Acis, her lover. One of these kills Acis, and thus the poem terminates in tragic fashion.

The success of *Polyphemus* and other Gongoresque effusions was out of all proportion to their merits.

Cultoristos and Conceptistos.

The effect produced by the poetry of Gongora on a people eager after novelty and impatient for a new field of enterprise, but who found themselves on all sides restrained within the bounds of authority by the laws and the church, presents a remarkable phenomenon in literature. Restricted within narrow barriers, they resolved to enfranchise themselves even from those of taste. They abandoned themselves to all the extravagancies of an unschooled imagination, merely because all the other faculties of their minds were under restraint. The followers of Gongora, proud of a talent so laboriously acquired, considered all those who either did not admire or did not imitate the style of their master as writers of inferior calibre, who could not comprehend him. None of these imitators, however, had the talent of Gongora, and their style is, therefore, still more false and exaggerated. Presently they divided themselves into two schools, one retaining only his pedantry, the other aspiring to the genius of their master. The former devoted themselves to long critiques and tedious explanations of his works, upon which they expended their entire stock of erudition. They have been surnamed, in derision, cultoristos, from the *estilo culto*, or cultivated style, which they aped and extolled. Others were named conceptistos, from the *conceptos* of which they made use in common with Marini and Gon-

gora. They sought after uncommon thoughts, antitheses and metaphors, and then clothed them in the eccentric language which their master had invented.

In this numerous school some names have shared in the celebrity of its founder. Thus Alonzo de Lodesma, who died some years before Gongora, employed his peculiar style and diction to express in poetry the mysteries of the Catholic religion. Felix Arteaga, who was preacher to the court in 1618, applied the same eccentric methods to pastoral poetry.

While Gongora introduced into the higher walks of poetry an affected and almost unintelligible style, and his followers descended, even in sacred subjects, to the most preposterous play of words, the ancient school had not been wholly abandoned. The party which designated itself as classical still continued, and made itself conspicuous by the severity of its criticism on the imitators of Gongora. But in spite of its adherence to classic examples and principles, those who composed it had lost all inspiration, all creative genius, and their productions no longer possessed the charm of novelty. The few who won repute in this purer style of poetry are but as the last flashes of an expiring flame.

Argensola.

Among the contemporaries of Cervantes and Lopé de Vega, Lupericio Leonardo de Argensola, whom the Spaniards compare to Horace, occupies a distinguished place. Lupericio was born in 1565, at Balbastro, of a family originally of Ravenna, but for some time established in

Aragon. After having finished his studies at Saragossa, he wrote in his youth three tragedies, of which we know nothing except through Cervantes, who expresses for them, in *Don Quixote*, the highest admiration. He was attached as secretary to the empress Maria of Austria, who was living in Spain; he was commissioned by the king and the states of Aragon to continue the *Annals* of Zurita, and he ultimately attended the count de Lemos to Naples as secretary of state, and died there in 1613. After his death, the *Annals* were continued by his brother, Bartolomeo.

Notwithstanding the suffrage of Cervantes, the reputation of Argensola does not rest on his dramatic works. It is the lyric poetry of the two brothers, and their epistles and satires in the manner of Horace which have rendered their names illustrious. Spain had at this time a great number of poets in the lyric and bucolic style, who followed the example of the Romans and Italians, of Boscan and Garcilaso. Like the Italians of the fifteenth century, they are more remarkable for purity of taste and elegance of language than for richness of invention or force of genius; and while we acknowledge their talents, if we do not possess an insatiable appetite for love-songs or an unlimited toleration of commonplace ideas, we shall soon be wearied with their perusal. Vincenzo Espinel, Christoval de Mesa, Juan de Morales, Augustine de Texada, Gregorio Morillo, a happy imitator of Juvenal, Luis Barahona de Sota, a rival of Garcilaso, Gonzales de Argotey Molina, whose poems breathe an uncommon ardor of patriotism, and the three Figueroas, distinguished by their success in differ-

ent styles, are the chief among a crowd of lyric poets whose names can with difficulty be preserved from oblivion.

Quevedo.

To a very different class must be assigned Quevedo, the only man, perhaps, who deserves to be placed by the side of Cervantes, and whose works, without rivaling the fame of the latter, are permanently established in Europe. Of all the Spanish writers, Quevedo bears the greatest resemblance to Voltaire, though he had not the brilliancy of the great Frenchman. Like Voltaire, he possessed a great variety of knowledge and talent, a peculiar vein of pleasantry, a cynical gayety even when applied to serious subjects, a passion for attempting every style and leaving monuments of his genius on every topic, an adroitness in pointing the shafts of ridicule and the art of compelling the abuses of society to appear before the bar of public opinion.

Francisco de Quevedo Villegas was born at Madrid in 1580 of an illustrious family attached to the court, where its members held several honorable appointments. He lost both his parents when young, but his guardian, Jerome de Villanueva, placed him in the university of Alcala, where he made himself master of Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Arabic, Italian and French, and pursued at the same time the usual scholastic studies, including theology, law, belles-lettres, philology, natural philosophy and medicine. Distinguished at the university as a prodigy of learning, he acquired in the world at large the reputation of an accomplished cavalier. He was fre

quently chosen as arbiter in disputed points of honor, and while with the greatest delicacy he preserved the parties from any compromise of character, he had at the same time the art of reconciling them without shedding of blood. Highly accomplished in arms, he possessed a courage and address beyond that of the most skillful masters, although the malformation of his feet rendered bodily exercise painful to him. A quarrel of a somewhat chivalric nature caused a change in his destiny. He undertook one day the defense of a lady with whom he was unacquainted, and whom he saw insulted by a man likewise unknown to him. He killed his adversary, who proved to be a nobleman of consideration, and to avoid prosecution from his family, passed into Sicily with the duke d'Ossuna, who had been appointed viceroy of that island, afterward accompanying him to Naples. Charged with the general inspection of the finances of both countries, he established order by his strictness and integrity. Employed by the duke in the most important affairs, including embassies to the king of Spain and the pope, he crossed the sea seven times in his service.

During all this period he was frequently pursued by assassins, who wished to rid themselves of a negotiator, an enemy or a judge so dangerous to them. Taking part in the conspiracy of the duke of Bedmar against Venice, he was in that city with Giacomo Pietro at the moment of the detection of the plot, but saved himself by flight, while many of his most intimate friends perished on the scaffold. After a brilliant career he was involved in the disgrace of the duke d'Ossuna, was arrested and taken

to his estate of Torre de Juan Abad, where he was detained as a prisoner three years and a half, without being allowed during the first two years to call in a physician from the neighboring village for the benefit of his declining health. At length his innocence was acknowledged, and his freedom soon afterward restored; but on demanding indemnification for the injuries he had suffered he was sent into exile. This forced retirement gave him abundant leisure for the cultivation of letters, from which his political career had in some degree estranged him. During his imprisonment on his estates he wrote the greater part of his poems, and in particular those which he published as the works of a poet of the fifteenth century, under the name of Bachiller de la Torre. He was afterward recalled to court and appointed secretary to the king in 1632. The duke d'Olivarez invited him to enter again into public business and offered him an embassy to Genoa, which he declined, in order to devote himself entirely to his writings and to philosophy.

Quevedo was at this time in correspondence with the most eminent men in Europe; his countrymen appeared sensible of his merits, and the ecclesiastical benefices which he enjoyed, producing a revenue of eight hundred ducats, placed him in easy circumstances. These he resigned, in order to espouse, at the age of fifty-four, a lady of high birth, whom he lost within a few months. His grief brought him back to Madrid, where, in 1641, he was arrested at dead of night in the house of a friend as the author of a libel against good morals and government. He was not permitted to send to his house even

for a change of linen, or to give information of his apprehension, but was thrown into a narrow dungeon in a convent, where a stream of water passed under his bed. He was there treated as a common malefactor, with a degree of inhumanity seldom shown to the most abandoned criminals. His estate was confiscated, and in his confinement he was compelled to subsist upon common charity. His body was covered with wounds, and, as he was refused a surgeon, he was obliged to cauterize them himself. He was eventually set at liberty, in consequence of a letter to the duke d'Olivarez, which his biographer has preserved. After an imprisonment of twenty-two months his case was inquired into, and it was ascertained that a monk was the real author of the libel which he was suspected of having written. He was then restored to liberty, but his health was so utterly shattered that he could not remain at Madrid to demand satisfaction for his long confinement. Sick and broken in spirit, he returned to his estate, where he died in 1645.

A considerable part of the writings of Quevedo were stolen from him in his lifetime, and among them were his theatrical pieces and his historical works, so that he cannot, as he had hoped, lay claim to distinction in every class of letters. But notwithstanding the loss of fifteen manuscripts, which have never yet been recovered, there remain eleven large volumes, eight of which are in prose and three in verse.

Quevedo was always on his guard against exaggeration of style, pomp of diction, extravagant images, inverted sentences and ridiculous ornaments borrowed

from mythology. This false taste, for which Gongora was largely to blame, frequently afforded to our poet the subject of caustic satire. But, in some respects, Quevedo himself has not escaped the general contagion. He endeavored to attract admiration and to dazzle; he did not aim at a just expression of sentiment, but regarded only the impression it might produce, so that a certain striving after effect is apparent almost in every line of his writings. His ambition was to shine, and he had, in fact, more of this quality than any of his contemporaries, more, indeed, than any other Spanish author; but this constant display is not natural to him, and it is evident that his succession of pleasantries, strokes of wit, antitheses and piquant expressions are prepared beforehand, and that he is more desirous of dazzling than of persuading. On serious subjects it is needless to inquire whether or not he be sincere, while truth, propriety and rectitude appear to be indifferent to him. On humorous subjects he wishes to excite our laughter, and he succeeds; but he is so lavish of incident, and his strokes of wit are so often repeated, that he fatigues while he amuses us.

Treatise on Government.

Among the works of Quevedo there is one on the public administration, entitled *The Kingdom of God and the Government of Christ*, dedicated to Philip IV, as containing, in dramatic form, a complete treatise on the art of ruling. As secretary of the duke d'Ossuna, and as one who had executed the designs and often, per-

haps, directed the councils of this ambitious viceroy, he was certainly entitled to be heard. If he had developed the policy by which the terrible Spanish triumvirate, Toledo, Ossuna and Bedmar, attempted to govern Italy, he might have developed a depth of thought and a knowledge of mankind worthy of Machiavelli, exciting reflections in the minds of his readers on objects which had been to himself the subject of profound meditation. But the work of Quevedo is of quite a different nature, consisting of political lessons taken from the life of Christ and applied to kingly government, with the most pious motives, but with as complete an absence of practical instruction as if the work had been composed in a convent. All his examples are drawn from the sacred writings and not from the living history of the seventeenth century, in which the author had taken so considerable a share. One might justly have expected a rich treasure of precepts and observations, and a very different train of thought, from a man who had seen and acted so much. To recommend virtue, moderation and piety to a sovereign is, doubtless, well enough, but it requires something more than bare axioms to make a durable impression.

In the same work, however, Quevedo shows considerable talent and wit. It does not at first view appear easy to find, in the conduct of Jesus Christ, a model for all the duties of royalty and to draw from his life alone examples applicable to all the circumstances of war, finance and public administration, but the treatise was intended, perhaps, rather as a specimen of his invention than of his reasoning. Quevedo wishes to persuade

monarchs to command their armies in person. The relation of this advice to the moral precepts of the Gospel it is not easy to discover, but he illustrates his subject in a natural manner by the conduct of the apostle Peter, who, under the eyes of his master, attacks the whole body of the guard of the high-priest, but who, when he is separated from Jesus, shamefully denies him before a servant. "The apostle," he says, "then wanted his principal strength—the eye of Christ; his sword remained, but it had lost its edge; his heart was the same, but his master saw him no longer. A king who enters into the field himself and shares the dangers of his soldiers obliges them to be valiant; in lending his presence to the combat, he multiplies his strength and obtains two soldiers for one. If he dispatches them to the combat without seeing them he exculpates them from their negligence, he trusts his honor to chance, and has only himself to blame for any misfortune. An army which rulers only pay differs much from one which they command in person; the former produces only great expense, the latter wins renown; the one is supported by the enemy, the other by indolent monarchs who are wrapped up in sloth and vanity. It is one thing for soldiers to obey commands, and another to follow an example: the first seek their recompense in pay, the latter in fame. A king, it is true, cannot always combat in person, but he may, and he ought to appoint generals more known by their actions than by their pen." The precepts contained in these antithetical sentences are sufficiently just and true, and at the same time may also be considered as somewhat daring, since Philip III and

Philip IV never saw their armies, and Philip II was early separated from his. At the present day such doctrines would be considered as stale, and it must be confessed that the merit of Quevedo is less in the novelty of his thoughts than in the manner in which they are expressed.

Exile.

Novelty of expression may, perhaps, be considered as sufficient to expect in moral works, since their object is to inculcate, and to fix in the hearts of all, truths as ancient as the world and which never change. Quevedo, besides his purely religious works, has also left some treatises on moral philosophy. The most remarkable one, and that which affords us the best idea of his genius, is the amplification of a treatise attributed to Seneca and afterward imitated by Petrarch, on the consolations in good and bad fortune. The Roman author enumerated the calamities of human nature and applied to each the consolations of philosophy. Quevedo, after his translation of the Latin, adds a second chapter to each calamity, in which he estimates the same misfortune in a Christian point of view, generally with the design of proving that what the Roman philosopher supported in patience was to him a triumph. It is in the nature of a moral play, and the following is from the chapter on *Exile*:

Seneca.—Thou art banished: However I be forced, I cannot be driven out of my country; there is but one country for all men, and no one can quit it. Thou art banished: I shall

change only my place of abode, not my country; wherever I go I shall find a home; no place is a place of exile, but a new country to me. Thou shalt remain no longer in thy country. Our country is the place where we enjoy happiness; but real happiness is in the mind, not in place, and depends on a man's self; if he be wise, his exile is no more than a journey; if he be unwise, he suffers banishment. Thou art banished: That is to say, I am made a citizen of a new state.

Quevedo.—Thou art banished: This is a sentence to be passed only by death. Thou art banished: It is possible that some one may have the desire to banish me, but I know that no one has the power. I can travel in my country, but cannot change it. Thou art banished: Such may be my sentence, but the world will not allow it, for it is the country of all. Thou art banished: I shall depart, but shall not be exiled; the tyrant may change the place where I set my feet, but he cannot change my country. I shall quit my house for another house, my village for a new one; but who can drive me from my home? I shall quit the place where I was born, not the place for which I was born. Thou art banished: I quit only one part of my country for another part. Thou shalt see thy wife, thy children, thy relations no more: That might happen to me when living with them. Thou shalt be deprived of thy friends: I shall find others in the place to which I go. Thou shalt be forgotten: I am so already where I am thus rejected. Thou shalt be regretted by none: That will not be strange to me, leaving the place I leave. Thou shalt be treated as a stranger: That is a consolation to me, when I see how you treat your own citizens. Christ has said no man is a prophet in his own country; a stranger is, therefore, always better received.

Vision of the Last Judgment.

Many of *Quevedo's* works consist of visions, and here we find more gayety and variety in his pleasantries. It must be confessed that he has chosen singular subjects to jest upon, as church-yards, alguazils possessed of devils, the attendance of Pluto, and hell itself; but in

Spain even eternal punishment was not considered too serious a subject for witticisms. Another singular trait is the description of people on whom Quevedo has lavished his sarcasms. These are lawyers, physicians, notaries, tradespeople and, more particularly, tailors. It is the last that he attacks most viciously, and it is hard to imagine how a Castilian gentleman, a favorite of the viceroy of Naples and frequently an ambassador, could have been so far exasperated by the knights of the gentle craft as to owe them so bitter a grudge. For the rest, these visions are written with a gayety and originality which become still more marked from the austerity of the subject. The first vision, *El Sueno de las Calveras*, represents the Last Judgment. "Scarcely," he says, "had the trumpet sounded, when I saw those who had been soldiers and captains rising in haste from their graves, thinking they heard the signal for battle; the miser awoke in anxious fear of pillage; the epicures and the idle received it as a call to dinner, or to the chase. This was easily seen from the expression of their countenances, and I perceived that the real object of the sound of the trumpet was not understood by any of them. I afterward saw the souls flying from their former bodies, some in disgust, others in affright. To one body an arm was wanting, to another an eye. I could not forbear smiling at the diversity of the figures and admiring that Providence which, amidst such a confusion of limbs, prevented any one from taking the legs or the arms of his neighbor. I observed only one burial-ground where the dead seemed to be changing their heads; and I saw a notary whose soul was not in a satis-

factory state, and who, by way of excuse, pretended that it had been changed and was not his own. But what astonished me most was to see the bodies of two or three tradesmen, who had so entangled their souls that they had got their five senses at the end of the five fingers of their right hand."

Spanish Poverty.

One of the most striking circumstances in the domestic life of the Castilians is the difficulty of reconciling their excessive poverty with their pride and slothfulness. Among the poorer classes of other countries we observe privations of different kinds, want, sickness and sufferings, but absolute starvation is a calamity which the most wretched seldom experience, and if they are reduced to this state it generally throws them into despair. If we are to believe the Castilian writers, a considerable portion of their population are in constant apprehension of famine, yet never think of relieving themselves by labor. A crowd of poor gentlemen, and all the knights of industry, trouble themselves little about luxuries, as want is an ever-present guest, and all their stratagems are often employed in procuring a morsel of dry bread. After this repast their next object is to appear before the world in a dignified manner, and the art of arranging their rags, in order to give the idea of a shirt and clothes under their cloak, is the principal study of their lives. Here is, in truth, an essentially Spanish characteristic; for the Spaniard will always starve his belly to adorn his back, and this applies to the beggar

no less than to the impoverished grandee; nor is the mendicant his inferior in dignity.

The Ruins of Rome.

The poems of Quevedo have been arranged under the names of the nine Muses, as if to hint that he had essayed every branch of literature and sung on every subject. These classes are, however, intermixed and consist of lyric poems, pastorals, allegories, satires and burlesque pieces. Under the name of each Muse he arranges a great number of sonnets, for he has written more than a thousand, and some of them possess great beauty. The following is a translation of one *On the Ruins of Rome*:

Stranger, 'tis vain! 'Midst Rome, thou seek'st for Rome
In vain; thy foot is on her throne—her grave;
Her walls are dust; Time's conquering banners wave
O'er all her hills; hills which themselves entomb.
Yea! the proud Aventine is its own womb;
The royal Palatine is ruin's slave;
And medals, moldering trophies of the brave,
Mark but the triumphs of oblivion's gloom.
'Tiber alone endures, whose ancient tide
Worshipp'd the Queen of Cities on her throne,
And now, as round her sepulchre, complains.
O Rome! the steadfast grandeur of thy pride
And beauty, all is fled; and that alone
Which seem'd so fleet and fugitive remains!

Romances of Quevedo.

In the romances of Quevedo, arranged in short stanzas, neither the measure nor the rhyme of which

is difficult, we often find the most biting satire, much of humor, and not infrequently ease and grace; though these latter qualities do not accord with his constant desire to shine. Below are translated a few stanzas of one of them, written on his misfortunes. The struggles of a man of genius against calamity, and the means with which he arms himself for the contest, are always worthy of attention. When he has experienced reverses as severe as those of Quevedo, his pleasantries thereupon, although they may not be very refined, bear a certain value in our eyes, if only from the moral courage which they exhibit:

Since then, my planet has look'd on
With such a dark and scowling eye,
My fortune, if my ink were gone,
Might lend my pen as black a dye.

No lucky or unlucky turn
Did Fortune ever seem to play;
But ere I'd time to laugh or mourn,
'Twas sure to turn the other way.

Ye childless great who want an heir,
Leave all your vast domains to me,
And Heaven will bless you with a fair,
Alas! and numerous progeny.

They bear my effigy about
The village, as a charm of power,
If clothed, to bring the sunshine out,
If naked, to call down the shower.

When friends request my company,
No feasts and banquets meet my eye;
To holy mass they carry me,
And ask me alms, and bid good-bye.

Should bravos chance to lie perdu,
To break some happy lover's head,
I am their man, while he in view
His beauty serenades in bed.

A loosened tile is sure to fall
In contact with my head below,
Just as I doff my hat. 'Mong all
The crowd, a stone still lays me low.

The doctor's remedies alone
Ne'er reach the cause for which they're given
And if I ask my friends a loan,
They wish the poet's soul in heaven;

The poor man's eye amidst the crowd
Still turns its asking looks on mine;
Jostled by all the rich and proud,
No path is clear, whate'er my line.

Where'er I go I miss my way,
I lose, still lose at every game;
No friend I ever had would stay,
No foe but still remain'd the same.

We also find among the poems of Quevedo pastorals, allegories, epistles, odes, songs and the commencement of two epic poems. But here we must take our leave of a Spanish writer who has, perhaps, more nearly than any other, approached the French style of poetic composition.

V.

Calderon.

Pedro Calderon de la Barca was designated by his fellow-countrymen as the prince of dramatists, was known to foreigners as the most celebrated writer of his age, and by German critics was placed above all dramatic writers of modern days. His life was not very eventful. He was born in 1600 of a noble family, and at fourteen years of age began to write for the stage. After having finished his studies at the university, he remained some time attached to his patrons at court, quitting them to enter the army and serve during several campaigns in Italy and Flanders. The wars ended, Philip IV, who was passionately attached to the drama, and who himself published many pieces, having seen some plays of Calderon, presented him with the order of St. James, and attached him permanently to his court. From that time the plays of Calderon were represented with all the pomp which a rich monarch, delighting in such entertainments, had the power to bestow on them, and as poet-laureate he was often called on for special court festivals. In 1652, Calderon entered into orders, but without renouncing

the stage. Thenceforth, however, his compositions were generally religious pieces or autos sacramentales; and the more he advanced in years, the more he regarded all his works which were not religious as idle and unworthy of his genius. Admired by his contemporaries, caressed by kings, and loaded with honors and more substantial benefits, he survived to a very great age. His friend, Juan de Vera Tassis y Villaroel, having undertaken, in 1685, a complete edition of his dramatic works, Calderon authenticated all that are found in that collection. He died two years afterward, in his eighty-seventh year.

Schlegel's Criticisms on Calderon.

Augustus William Schlegel, who more than any person has contributed to the diffusion of Spanish literature in Germany, thus, in substance, speaks of Calderon in his lectures on the drama: "At length appeared Don Pedro (Calderon de la Barca, as fertile in genius and as diligent in writing as Lopé, but a poet of a different kind; a true poet, indeed, if ever man deserved the name. He was sixteen years old when Cervantes died, and thirty-five at the time of the death of Lopé, whom he survived nearly half a century. According to his biographers, Calderon wrote more than one hundred and twenty tragedies or comedies, more than one hundred sacred allegorical pieces, a hundred humorous interludes, and many other pieces not dramatic. As he composed for the theatre from his fourteenth year to his eighty-first, we must distribute his productions through a long space of time, and there is no reason to suppose

that he wrote with such wonderful celerity as Lope de Vega. He had sufficient time to mature his plans, which he did without doubt, but he must have acquired from practice great facility of execution.

German Criticisms on Calderon.

"In his works we find nothing left to chance; all is finished with perfect care, agreeably to fixed principles and to the first rules of art. This is undeniable, even if we should consider him as a mannerist in the pure and elevated romantic drama, and should regard as extravagant those lofty flights of poetry which rise to the extreme bounds of imagination. Calderon has converted into his own what served only as a model to his predecessors, and he required the noblest and most delicate flowers to satisfy his taste. Hence he repeats himself often in many expressions, images and comparisons, and even in dramatic situations, although he was too rich to borrow, I do not say from others, but even from himself. Theatrical perspective is in his eyes the first object of the dramatic art; but this view, so restricted in others, becomes positive in him. I am not acquainted with any dramatic author who has succeeded in an equal degree in producing that poetical charm which affects the senses at the same time that it preserves its ethereal essence."

The dramas of Calderon may be divided into four classes: representations of sacred history, from Scripture or legends; historical pieces; mythological, such as were drawn from some poetical source; and, lastly,

pictures of social life and manners. In a strict sense we can only call those pieces historical which are founded on national events. Calderon has painted with great felicity the early days of Spanish history; but his genius was far too national to adapt itself to other countries. He could easily identify himself with the sanguine natives of the South or the East, but in no manner with the people of classic antiquity, or of the North of Europe. When he has chosen his subjects from the latter, he has treated them in the most arbitrary manner. The beautiful mythology of Greece was to him only a pleasing fable, and the history of Rome a majestic hyperbole.

Sacred Dramas.

Still, his sacred pieces must, to a certain extent, be considered as historical; for, although he has ornamented them with the richest poetry, he has always exhibited with great fidelity the characters drawn from the Bible and sacred history. On the other hand, these dramas are distinguished by the lofty allegories which he often introduces, and by the religious enthusiasm with which the poet, in those which were destined for the feast of the Holy Sacrament, has illumined the universe, which he has allegorically painted with the purple flames of love. It is in this last style of composition that he has most excited the admiration of his contemporaries, and he himself also attached to it the greatest value. Of the sacred pieces of Calderon one of the best specimens has been given in his *Belshazzar's Feast* in a preceding volume, and with his further works of this

class we need not here concern ourselves, though his religious works are almost without number.

Romantic Dramas.

Calderon served in several campaigns in Flanders and in Italy, and as a knight of St. James performed the military duties of that order until he entered into the Church, thus showing that religion had been the ruling sentiment of his life. If it be true that a religious feeling, loyalty, courage, honor and love are the basis of romantic poetry, it must, in Spain, have attained its highest flight. The imagination of the Spaniards was as daring as their spirit of enterprise, and no adventure was too perilous for them. At an earlier period the predilection of the nation for wonders had been manifested in chivalric romances. These they wished to see repeated on the stage; and as at this epoch the Spanish poets had attained the highest point of art and social perfection, had infused a musical spirit into their poetry, and, purifying it of everything material and gross, had left only the choicest colors and odors, there resulted an irresistible charm of contrast between the subject and its composition. The spectators imagined they again saw on the stage a revival of that national glory which, after having threatened the whole world, was now more than half extinct, while the ear was gratified by a novel style of poetry, in which were combined all the harmony of the most varied metres, elegance, genius and a prodigality of images and comparisons which the Spanish tongue alone permitted. The treasures of the most dis-

tant zones were in poetry, as in reality, imported to satisfy the mother-country, and one may assert that, in this poetic empire, as in the terrestrial kingdom of Charles V, the sun never set.

Comedy of Manners and Intrigue.

Even in the plays of Calderon which represent modern manners, and which for the most part descend to the tone of common life, we feel ourselves influenced by a charm of fancy which prevents us from regarding them as comedies, in the ordinary sense of the word. The comedies of Shakespeare are composed of two parts, strangers to each other: the comic part, which is always conformable to English manners, because the comic imitation is drawn from well-known and local circumstances, and the romantic part, which is derived from the stage of the South, as his native soil was not in itself sufficiently poetical. In Spain, on the contrary, national manners might be regarded in an ideal point of view. It is true, that would not have been possible if Calderon had introduced us into the interior of domestic life, where its wants and habits reduce everything to narrow and vulgar limits. His comedies conclude, like those of the ancients, with marriage, but differ from them wholly in the antecedent part. In the latter, in order to gratify sensual passions and interested views, the most immoral means are often employed; the persons, with all the powers of their mind, are only physical beings, opposed to one another, seeking to take advantage of their mutual weaknesses. Calderon presents to us,

it is true, his principal personages of both sexes in the first effervescence of youth and in the confident anticipation of all the joys of life, but the prize for which they contend, and which they pursue, rejecting all others, cannot, in their eyes, be exchanged for any other good. Honor, love and jealousy are the ruling passions. Their noble struggles form the plot of the piece, which is not entangled by elaborate knavery and deceit. Honor is there a feeling which rests on an elevated morality, sanctifying the principle without regard to consequences. It may, by stooping to the opinions and prejudices of society, become the weapon of vanity, but under every disguise we recognize it as the reflection of refined sentiment.

An appropriate emblem of the delicacy with which Calderon represents the sentiment of honor is the fable narrated of the ermine, which, rather than suffer the whiteness of its fur to be soiled, resigns itself to its pursuers. This refined sentiment equally predominates in the female characters of Calderon, overruling the power of love, which only ranks at the side of honor and not above it. According to the sentiments which the poet professes, the honor of woman consists in confining her love to an honorable man, loving him with pure affection, and allowing no equivocal attentions, inconsistent with the most severe feminine dignity. This love demands an inviolable secrecy until a legal union permits a public declaration, and thus appears as a secret and holy vow. It is true that, in order to satisfy love, trick and dissimulation, which honor elsewhere forbids, are permitted. But the most delicate regard is observed in

the collision of love with other duties, and particularly those of friendship. The force of jealousy, always awake, always terrible in its explosion, is not, as in the East, excited by passion only, but by the slightest preference of the heart and by its almost imperceptible manifestations. Love is thus ennobled; for this is a passion which falls beneath itself if it is not wholly exclusive. It often happens that the plot which these contending passions form produces no result, and the catastrophe then becomes comic. At other times it assumes a tragic shape, and honor becomes a hostile destiny to him who cannot satisfy it without destroying his own happiness by the commission of a crime.

Such is the lofty spirit of these dramas, which foreigners have called comedies of intrigue, but which the Spaniards, after the costume in which they are performed, have named comedies of the mantle and the sword. In general they possess nothing of the burlesque further than the part of the humorous valet, who is known under the name of gracioso. This personage, indeed, serves only to parody the ideal motives by which his master is governed, but he does it often in the most elegant and lively manner. It is seldom that he is employed as an instrument to increase the plot by his artifices, as this is usually effected by accidental and well-contrived incidents. Other plays are named *comedias de figuron*, the parts in which are cast in the same manner, only distinguished by one prominent figure in caricature. To many of these pieces of Calderon the claim of dramatic character cannot be denied, although we must not expect to see the more delicate traits of char-

acter exhibited by the poets of a nation whose powerful passions and fervent imaginations are irreconcilable with a talent for accurate observation.

Calderon bestowed on another class of his dramas the name of festival pieces. These were intended to be represented in court on occasions of solemnity. From their theatrical splendor, the frequent change of scene, the decoration presented to the eye and the music introduced, we may call them poetical operas. In fact, they are more poetical than any other compositions of this kind, since by their poetry alone an effect is produced which in simple opera is obtained only by scenery, music and dancing. Here the poet abandons himself to the highest flights of fancy, and his representations seem almost too ethereal for earth.

Religious Sentiment.

But the true genius of Calderon is more peculiarly shown in his management of religious subjects. Love is painted by him with its common attributes and speaks only the language of the poetic art. But religion is his true flame, the heart of his heart. For her alone he touches those chords to which the soul most deeply responds. He seems not to have wished to effect this through worldly means, as piety was his only motive. He had escaped from the labyrinth and the deserts of skepticism to the asylum of faith, whence he contemplated and painted, with an imperturbable serenity of soul, the passing tempests of the world. To him, life was no longer an enigma; even his tears, like dewdrops

in the beams of morning, reflecting the image of heaven. His poetry, whatever the subject may ostensibly be, is an unceasing hymn of joy on the splendors of creation. With delighted astonishment he celebrates the wonders of nature and of human art, as if he saw them for the first time in all the attraction of novelty. It is as the first awakening of Adam, accompanied by an eloquence and a justness of expression which an intimate knowledge of nature, the highest cultivation of mind and the most mature reflection could alone produce. When he unites the most opposite objects, the greatest and the smallest, the stars and the flowers, the sense of his metaphor always expresses the relation of his creatures to their common Creator, and this delightful harmony and concert of the universe is to him a new and unfading image of that eternal love which comprehends all things.

Calderon was yet living while in other countries of Europe a certain mannerism began to predominate in the arts, and literature received that prosaic direction which became so general in the eighteenth century. He may, therefore, be considered as placed on the highest pinnacle of romantic poetry, and all her brilliancy was lavished on his works, as in a display of fireworks the brightest colors and the most striking lights are reserved for the last explosion.

Degeneracy of the Spaniards.

Though endowed by nature with a noble genius and the most brilliant imagination, Calderon appears to have

been essentially a man of his age—the wretched epoch of Philip IV. When a nation is so corrupt as to have lost all exaltation of character it has no longer before its eyes models of true virtue and real grandeur and, endeavoring to represent them, it falls into exaggeration. Such would seem to be the failing of Calderon, who often oversteps the line in every department of dramatic art. Truth sometimes appears unknown to him, and the ideal which he forms to himself offends from want of propriety. There was in the ancient Spanish knights a noble pride, which sprang from a sentiment of affection for that glorious nation in which they were objects of high importance, but the empty haughtiness of the heroes of Calderon increases with the misfortunes of their country and their own debasement. There was in the manners of the early knights a just estimate of their own character which prevented affronts and assured to every one the respect of his equals; but when public and private honor became continually compromised by a corrupt and base court, the stage represented honor as a point of punctilious delicacy which, unceasingly wounded, required the most sanguinary satisfaction, and could not long exist without destroying all the bonds of society. The life of a gentleman was, in a manner, made up of duelling and assassination, and if the manners of the nation became brutalized, those of the stage were still more so. In the same way the morals of the female sex were corrupted; intrigue had penetrated beyond the blinds of windows and the grates of the convent, where the younger part of the sex were immured; gallantry had introduced itself into domestic

life and had poisoned the matrimonial state. But Calderon gives to the women he represents a severity proportioned to the relaxation of morals; he paints love wholly in the mind; he gives to passion a character which it cannot support; he loses sight of nature, and aiming at the ideal, he produces only exaggeration.

Exaggeration in Style.

If the manners of the stage were corrupt, its language was still more so. The Spaniards, as we have seen, owe to their intercourse with the Arabs a taste for hyperbole and for the most extravagant images. But the manners of Calderon are not borrowed from the East; they are entirely his own, and he goes beyond all flights which his predecessors had allowed themselves. If his imagination furnishes him with a brilliant image, he pursues it through a whole page and abandons it only through fatigue. He links comparisons, and, overcharging his subject with the most brilliant colors, he does not allow its form to be perceived under the multiplied touches which he bestows on it. He gives to sorrow so poetical a language, and makes her seek such unexpected comparisons, and justify their propriety with so much care, that we withhold our compassion from one who is diverted from his griefs by the display of his wit. The affectation and antithesis with which the Italians have been reproached, under the name of *concetti*, are, in Marini and in the greatest mannerists, simple expressions in comparison with the involved periods of Calderon. We see that he is affected with that malady of genius which forms

an epoch in every literature on the extinction of good taste, an epoch which commenced in Rome with Lucan, in Italy with the seicentisti, or poets of the sixteenth century; which distinguished in France the Hotel de Rambouillet; which prevailed in England under the reign of Charles II, and which all persons have agreed to condemn as a perversion of taste. Examples of this style are plentiful in the extracts that follow; but instead of pausing to notice them, it will be better to detach a single passage as a specimen. It is taken from a play in which Alexander, duke of Parma, relates how he became the rival in love of Don Cæsar, his secretary and friend:

In gallant mood, I sought my sister's bower,
And saw with her and her ladies there,
My Anna, in a garden of the Loves,
Presiding over every common flower,
A fragrant rose and fair;
Or rather, not to do her beauty wrong,
I saw a star on beds of roses glowing,
Or, 'midst the stars, the star of morning young
May better tell my love's bright deity;
Or, on the morning stars its light bestowing,
I saw a dazzling sun; or, in the sky,
'Midst many brilliant suns of rivalry,
I saw her shine with such a peerless ray
That heaven was fill'd with that one glorious day.
But when she spoke, then was my soul entranced:
Eyes, ears and every sense in rapture danced;
The miracle of nature stood confessed,
Fair modesty, in modest beauty dressed.
It could not last: she bade farewell!
But was that evening transient as a dream?
Ask love; and he will tell how fleet hours seem
Moments, which should be ages, ages well

Might seem but moments, as they speed away!
 And when she bade adieu,
 With courteous steps I watched my love's return.
 We parted. Let it now suffice to say,
 Loving, I die, and absent, live to mourn!

Such language, which, if it be poetical, is still extremely false, becomes still more misplaced when it is employed to express great passions or great sufferings. In a tragedy entitled *Love after Death*, otherwise replete with beautiful passages, Alvaro Tuzani, a revolted Moor, running to the aid of his mistress, Clara, finds her poniarded by a Spanish soldier, at the taking of Galera; she yet breathes, and recognizes him:

Clara.—Thy voice—thy voice, my love, I fain would hear:
 'Twill give me life; 'twill make my death most happy.
 Come nearer. Let me feel you in my arms.
 Let me die thus—and—— (She dies.)

Alvaro.—Alas, alas! They err who say that love
 Can knit twain hearts, and souls, and lives in one;
 For were such miracle a living truth,
 Thou hadst not fled, or I had died with thee;
 Living or dying, then, we had not parted,
 But hand in hand smiled o'er our equal fate.
 Ye heavens! that see my anguish; mountains wild!
 That echo it; winds! which my torments hear;
 Flames! that behold my sufferings; can ye all
 See Love's fair starry light extinguished thus,
 His chief flower wither, and his soft breath fail?
 Come, ye who know what love is, tell me now;
 In these my sorrows, in this last distress,
 What hope more is there for the wretched lover
 Who, on the night that should have crowned his passion
 So long and faithful, finds his love, Oh, horror!
 Bathed in her own sweet blood; a lily flower
 Bespangled with those frightful drops of red;

Gold, precious, purified in fiercest fire?
What hope, when, for the nuptial bed he dreamed of,
He clasps the cold urn, weeps o'er dust and ashes,
Whom once he worshipped, Love's divinity?
Nay, tell me not of comfort: I'll none of it.
For, if in such disasters men do weep not,
They will do ill to follow other's counsels.

A correct taste would have expressed, in a situation so violent and so calamitous, the agonizing cry of the lover, and would have made the audience participators of his grief; but we all feel that the language of Alvaro Tuzani is false, and he instantly checks the emotion which the incident is calculated to produce; a fault continually repeated by Calderon. His predilection for investing with the beauties of poetry the language of all his personages, deprives him of really heartfelt and natural expressions. We may observe in him many situations of admirable effect, but we never meet with a passage touching or sublime from its simplicity or its truth.

The admirers of Calderon have almost imputed it to him, as a merit, that he has not clothed any foreign subject with national manners. His patriotism, they say, was too ardent to have allowed him to adopt any other forms than those peculiar to Spain; but this gave him the more opportunity to display all the riches of his imagination, and his creations have a fantastic character, which gives a new charm to pieces where he has not allowed himself to be fettered by facts. Such is the opinion of the critics of Germany; but after showing so much indulgence on one side, how happens it on the

other that they have treated with so much severity the tragic writers of France for having given to their Grecian and Roman heroes traits and forms of society drawn from the court of Louis XIV? An author of the *Mysteries* of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries might be pardoned for confounding history, chronology and facts. At that time information was scanty, and one-half of ancient history was veiled under clouds of darkness. But how shall we excuse Calderon, or the public for whom he wrote, when we find him mixing together incongruous facts, manners and events in the most illustrious periods of Roman history in a way which would startle a school-boy? Thus, in *The Arms of Beauty*, he represents Coriolanus as continuing against Sabinus, king of the Sabines, the war which Romulus had already commenced against the same imaginary king; and he even speaks to us of the conquest of Spain and Africa. The character of Coriolanus, and that of the senate and the people, are alike travestied. It is impossible to recognize a Roman in the sentiments of any person in the piece. Even Metastasio, in his Roman dialogues, was infinitely more faithful to history and to the manners of antiquity.

But we must not attribute specially to Calderon the ignorance of foreign manners which belonged to his country and his government. The circle of permitted information became every day more circumscribed. All books containing the history of other countries, or their state of civilization, were severely prohibited; for there was not one of them which did not contain a bitter satire on the government and religion of Spain. How then

could the people be allowed to study the ancients, with whom political liberty was inseparable from existence? Whoever had been penetrated by their spirit, must, at the same time, have regretted the noble privileges which their nation had lost. How could they be allowed to contemplate the history of those modern nations, whose prosperity and glory were founded on religious liberty? After having studied them, how could they have tolerated the Inquisition?

The Devotion of the Cross.

Calderon is the true poet of the Inquisition. Animated by a religious sentiment which is visible in all his pieces, he inspires us only with horror for the faith which he professes. No dramatist ever so far disfigured Christianity; no one ever assigned to it passions so ferocious or morals so corrupt. Among a great number of pieces dictated by the same fanaticism, the one which most exhibits it is *The Devotion of the Cross*. His object in this is to convince his Christian audience that the adoration of this sign of the Church is sufficient to exculpate them from all crimes, and to secure the protection of the Deity. The hero, Eusebio, an incestuous brigand and professed assassin, but preserving in the midst of crimes devotion to the cross, at the foot of which he was born, and the impress of which he bears on his heart, erects a cross over the grave of his victims, and often checks himself, in the midst of crime, at the sight of the sacred symbol. His sister, Julia, who is also his mistress, and is even more abandoned and ferocious

than himself, exhibits the same degree of superstition. He is at length slain in a combat with a party of soldiers commanded by his own father; but God restores him to life again, in order that a holy saint may receive his confession, and thus assure his reception into the kingdom of heaven. His sister, on the point of being apprehended, and of becoming at length the victim of her monstrous iniquities, embraces a cross, which she finds at her side, and vows to heaven to return to her convent and deplore her sins; and this cross suddenly rises into the skies, and bears her far away from her enemies to an impenetrable asylum.

Sufficient has now been said both in praise and censure of Calderon; but let it not be imagined that the faults brought forward are sufficient to obliterate the beauties so highly extolled by Schlegel. The latter are, doubtless, sufficient to place Calderon among poets of the richest and most original fancy, and of the most attractive and brilliant style, as will appear in a brief analysis of his works.

The Inflexible Prince.

The plays of Calderon are not divided into comedies and tragedies. They all bear the same title of *La Gran Comedia*, which was probably given to them by the actors in their bills, in order to attract public notice, and which appellation has remained with them. They all belong, moreover, to the same class. We find the same passions and the same characters, which, according to the development of the plot, produce either a calam-

itous or a fortunate catastrophe, without our being able to foresee it from the title or from the first scenes. Thus, neither the rank of the persons, nor the exposition, nor the first incidents prepare the spectator for emotions such as are produced by *The Inflexible Prince* and the *Secreto a Vozes*. *The Inflexible Prince*, the *Regulus of Spain*, is one of the most moving plays of Calderon. In a translation by Schlegel it was long performed with great success on the German stage; it has been translated and acted in English, and may, therefore, be properly selected for analysis.

The Portuguese, after having driven the Moors from the whole western coast of the peninsula, passed over into Africa to pursue still further the enemies of their faith and to undertake the conquest of the kingdoms of Fez and Morocco. The same ardor led them to seek a new passage to the Indies and to plant the standard of Portugal on the coast of Guinea, in the kingdom of Congo, at Mozambique, at Diu, at Goa and Macao. John I had added Ceuta to the domain of Portugal, and after his death all his sons were eager to distinguish themselves against the infidels. In 1438 Edward, who succeeded him, sent his two brothers with a fleet to attempt the conquest of Tangiers. One of these was Fernando, the hero of Calderon, the most valiant of princes; the other was Henry, who was afterward celebrated for his assiduous efforts in exploring the sea of Guinea for a passage to the Indies. Their expedition is the subject of the tragedy.

The first scene is laid in the gardens of the king of Fez, where the attendants of Phenicia, a Moorish prin-

cess, call upon some Christian slaves to sing, in order to entertain their mistress. "How," they reply, "can our singing be agreeable to her, when its only accompaniment is the sound of the fetters and chains which bind us?" They sing, however, until Phenicia appears, surrounded by her women, who address to her the most flattering compliments on her beauty in the exaggerated eastern style which the Spanish language has preserved, and which would seem absurd in any other. Phenicia, in her sadness, repels their attentions; she speaks of her grief, and she attributes it to a passion which she cannot vanquish and which seems to be accompanied by sorrowful presentiments. Her discourse, consisting wholly of description and brilliant images, appears to be strained and unnatural; but we must not regard the tragedies of Calderon as an imitation of actual nature, but of nature in the poetical world, just as the opera is an image of it in the musical world.

Phenicia is attached to Muley Cheik, cousin of the king of Fez, and his admiral and general; but her father desires her to marry Tarudant, prince of Morocco. No sooner has she learned his wish than Muley returns from a cruise and announces to the king the approach of a Portuguese fleet, commanded by two princes, and carrying fourteen thousand soldiers for an attack on Tangiers. His speech, which is intended to serve as an explanation of the principal action, is two hundred and ten lines in length, but all the splendor of the poetry with which it is interspersed does not compensate for such an harangue. Muley receives orders to oppose the landing of the Portuguese with the cavalry of the coast.

The landing is the subject of the next scene. It is effected near Tangiers amid the sound of clarions and trumpets. In the midst of this military pomp each of the Christian heroes, as he reaches the shore, manifests his character, his hopes and fears and the manner in which he is affected by the evil omens which befell them on their voyage. While Fernando is endeavoring to dispel this superstitious fear from the hearts of his knights he is attacked by Muley Cheik, but obtains an easy victory over his hastily levied body of horse. Muley himself falls into his hands, and Fernando, not less generous than brave, when he finds that his prisoner runs the danger, by his captivity, of losing forever the object of his love, restores him to liberty without ransom.

Meanwhile, the kings of Fez and Morocco had assembled their armies and advanced with an overwhelming force. Retreat is now impossible for the Portuguese; they are defeated by the Moors, and Fernando, after having fought valiantly, surrenders to the king of Fez, who makes himself known to him, while his brother, Henry, also delivers himself up with the flower of the Portuguese army. The Moorish king makes a generous use of his victory, and treats the prince with a regard and courtesy that are due to an equal when he is no longer an enemy. He declares that he cannot restore him to liberty until the restitution of Ceuta, and he sends back Henry to Portugal to procure by this means the ransom of his brother. It is on this that the fate of Fernando turns, as he is unwilling that his liberty should cost Portugal her most brilliant conquest, and he charges Henry to remind his brother, king Edward,

that he is a Christian and a Christian prince. This ends the first act.

In the second act Don Fernando appears surrounded by Christian captives, who recognize him and hasten to throw themselves at his feet, hoping to escape from slavery with him. Fernando addresses them:

My countrymen, your hands! Heaven only knows
How gladly I would rend your galling chains,
And freely yield my freedom up for yours!
Yet, Oh! believe, the more benignant fate
That waits us, soon shall soothe our bitter lot.
The wretched, well I know, ask not for counsel;
But pardon me, 'tis all I have to give:
No more; but to your tasks, lest ye should rouse
Your masters' wrath.

The king of Fez prepares a feast for Fernando, proposes to him a hunting excursion, and tells him that captives like him are an honor to the man who detains them. Henry returns from Portugal with news of Edward's death, caused by grief for the defeat at Tangiers, but before expiring he had given orders to restore Ceuta to the king of Fez for the redemption of the captives, and Alfonso V, who had succeeded him, sends Henry back to Africa to make the transfer. But Fernando refuses:

My brother, well I deem,
Inserted this condition in his will,
Not that it should be acted to the letter,
But to express how much his noble heart
Desir'd a brother's freedom. That must be
Obtain'd by other means; by peace or war.
How ever may a Christian prince restore

A city to the Moors, bought with the price
Of his own blood? for he it was who first,
Arm'd with a slender buckler and his sword,
Planted our country's banner on its walls.
But even if we o'erlook this valiant deed,
Shall we forsake a city that hath rear'd
Within its walls new temples to our God?
Our faith, religion, Christian piety,
Our country's honor, all forbid the deed.
What! shall the dwelling of the living God
Bow to the Moorish crescent? Shall its walls
Reëcho to the insulting courser's hoof,
Lodg'd in the sacred courts, or to the creed
Of unbelievers? Where our God hath fix'd
His mansion, shall we drive his people forth?
Such ransom I abjure. Henry, return;
And tell our countrymen that thou hast left
Thy brother buried on the Afric shore,
For life is here, indeed, a living death!
And King, kind brother, Moors and Christians, all
Bear witness to a prince's constancy,
Whose love of God, his country and his faith
O'erlived the frowns of fortune.

The King.—Proud and ungrateful prince, and is it thus
Thou spurn'st my favor, thus repay'st my kindness?
Deniest my sole request? Thou haply here
Thinkest thyself sole ruler, and would'st sway
My kingdom? But henceforth thou shalt be
By that vile name thou hast thyself assumed—
A slave! thou shalt be treated as a slave.
Thy brother and thy countrymen shall see
Thee lick the dust, and kiss my royal feet.

After a warm altercation between the king and the captive prince, with many vain solicitations from Fernando's brother, the Moorish monarch calls one of his officers:

Hence with this captive, rank him with the rest;
Bind on his neck and limbs a heavy chain.
My horses be his care, the bath, the garden.
Let him be humbled by all abject tasks;
Away with this silk mantle; clothe his limbs
In the slave's garb. His food, the blackest bread;
Water his drink; a cold cell his repose;
And let his servants share their master's fate.

We next see Fernando in the garden, working with the other slaves. One of the captives, who does not know him, sings before him a romance of which he is the hero; another bids him be of good heart, as the prince, Don Fernando, had promised to procure them all their liberty. Don Juan Continho, count of Miralva, one of the Portuguese knights, who, from the time of their landing, had been the most distinguished for his bravery and attachment to Fernando, devotes himself to his service, makes a vow not to quit him and introduces him to the prisoners, all of whom, in the midst of their suffering, hasten to show him respect. Muley Cheik now arrives and, dismissing all witnesses, addresses Fernando: "Learn," he says, "that loyalty and honor have their abode in the heart of a Moor. I come not to confer a favor, but to discharge a debt." He then hastily informs him that he will find near the window of his prison instruments for releasing himself from his fetters; that he himself will break the bars and that a vessel will wait for him at the shore to convey him home to his own country. The king surprises them at this moment, and instead of manifesting any suspicions, he engages Muley, by the ties of honor and duty, to exe-

cute his wishes. He confides to him the custody of prince Fernando, assured that he alone is above all corruption, and that neither friendship, fear nor interest can seduce him. Muley feels that his duties have changed since the king has reposed this confidence in him. He still, however, hesitates between honor and gratitude. Fernando, whom he consults, decides against himself. That prince declares that he will not avail himself of this offer; that he will even refuse his liberty if any one else should propose his escape, and Muley submits at last with regret to what he considers the law of duty and honor.

Muley, being himself unable to restore his benefactor to liberty, endeavors to obtain his freedom through the generosity of the Moorish king. At the commencement of the third act we see him imploring his compassion on behalf of the prisoner. He gives a moving picture of the state to which this unhappy prince is reduced, sleeping in a damp dungeon, working at the baths and in the stables, deprived of food, sinking under disease and resting on a mat at one of the gates of his master's house. The details of his misery are such that only the Spanish stage would suffer even an allusion to them. One of his servants and a faithful knight attach themselves to him and never quit him, dividing with him their small ration, which is scarcely sufficient for the support of a single person. The king hears these revolting details, but recognizing only obstinacy in the conduct of the prince, he replies in the words: "'Tis well, Muley." Phenicia comes, in her turn, to intercede with her father for Fernando, but he imposes silence on her.

The two ambassadors of Morocco and Portugal are then announced and prove to be the sovereigns themselves, Tarudant and Alfonso V, who avail themselves of the protection of the law of nations to treat in person of their interests. They are admitted to an audience at the same time. Alfonso offers to the king of Fez twice the value in money of the city of Ceuta as the ransom of his brother, and he declares that if it be refused his fleet is ready to waste Africa with fire and sword. Tarudant, who hears these threats, considers them as a personal provocation, and replies that he is about to take the field with the army of Morocco, and that he will shortly be in a condition to repel the aggressions of the Portuguese. The king of Fez meanwhile refuses to liberate Fernando on any other terms than the restitution of Ceuta. He bestows his daughter on Tarudant and orders Muley to accompany her to Morocco. Whatever pain Muley may feel in assisting at the nuptials of his mistress and abandoning his friend in his extreme misery, he prepares to obey. The commands of a king are considered by Calderon as the fiat of destiny, and it is by such sentiments that we recognize the courtier of Philip IV.

The scene changes, and Don Juan and other captives bear in Fernando on a mat and lay him on the ground. This is the last time that he appears on the stage, for he is overpowered by the weight of slavery, disease and misery. His condition chills the heart and is too strongly drawn for the stage, where physical evils should be introduced only with great reserve. In order, indeed, to diminish this painful impression, Calderon bestows on him the language of a saint undergoing martyrdom.

Fernando looks upon his sufferings as so many trials, and returns thanks to God for every pang he endures, as the pledge of his approaching beatification. Meanwhile, the king of Fez, Tarudant and Phenicia pass through the street where he lies, and the captive prince addresses them: "Bestow your alms," he cries, "on a poor sufferer. I am a human being like yourselves; I am sick and in affliction, and dying of hunger. Have pity on me, for even the beasts of the forest compassionate their kind." The king reproaches him with his obstinacy. His liberation, he tells him, depends on himself alone, and the terms are still the same. The reply of Fernando is wholly in the Oriental style. It is not by arguments, nor, indeed, by sentiments of compassion, that he attempts to touch his master, but by an exuberance of poetical images which was regarded as real eloquence by the Arabians, and which was, perhaps, more likely to touch a Moorish king than a discourse more appropriate to nature and to circumstances. Mercy, he says, is the first duty of kings. The whole earth bears in every class of creation emblems of royalty, and to these emblems is always attached the royal virtue of generosity. The lion, the monarch of the forest; the eagle, the ruler of the feathered race; the dolphin, the king of fish; the pomegranate, the empress of fruits; the diamond, the first of minerals, are all, agreeably to the traditions cited by Fernando, alive to the sufferings of mankind. As a man, Fernando is allied to the king of Fez by his royal blood, notwithstanding their difference in religion. In every faith, cruelty is alike condemned. Still, while the prince considers it his duty to pray for

the preservation of his life, he desires not life, but martyrdom, and awaits it at the hands of the king. The king retorts that all his sufferings proceed from himself alone. "When you compassionate yourself, Don Fernando," he says, "I, too, shall compassionate you."

After the Moorish princes have retired, Fernando announces to Don Juan, who brings him bread, that his attentions and generous devotion will soon be no longer required, as he feels himself approaching his last hour. He only asks to be invested in holy garments, as he is the grand master of the religious and military order of Advice, and he begs his friends to mark the place of his sepulture: "Although I die a captive, my redemption is sure, and I hope one day to enter the mansions of the blessed. Since to thee, my God, I have consecrated so many churches, grant me a dwelling in thine own mansions." His companions then depart, carrying him in their arms.

Again the scene changes, representing the coast of Africa, on which King Alfonso, Prince Henry and the Portuguese troops have just landed. It is announced to them that the army of Tarudant is approaching and that it is conducting Phenicia to Morocco. Alfonso addresses his troops, and prepares for battle. The shade of Don Fernando, in the habit of his chapter, appears to them, and promises them victory. Once more the scene changes and represents the walls of Fez. The king appears on the walls, surrounded by his guards. Juan Coutinho brings forward the coffin of Don Fernando. The stage is veiled in night, but a strain of military music is heard in the distance. It draws near,

and the shade of Fernando appears, with a torch in his hand, conducting the Portuguese army to the foot of the walls. Alfonso calls to the Moorish king, announces to him that he has taken prisoners his daughter, Phenicia, and Tarudant, his proposed son-in-law, and offers to exchange them for Fernando. The king is seized with profound grief when he finds his daughter in the hands of those very enemies to whom he had behaved with so much cruelty after his victory. He has now no longer the means of redeeming her, and he informs the Portuguese king with regret of the death of Fernando. But if Alfonso was desirous of restoring his brother to liberty, he is now not less anxious to recover his mortal remains, which are to be held as a precious relic to Portugal. He divines that this is the object of the miracle which presented the shade of the prince to the eyes of the whole army, and he accepts the exchange of the body of his brother against Phenicia and all the other prisoners. He only requires that Phenicia be given in marriage to Muley, in order to recompense the brave Moor for the friendship and protection he had extended to his brother. He thanks Don Juan for his generous services to Fernando, and consigns to the care of his victorious army the relics of the newly-canonized saint of Portugal, a saint, let us add, the records of whose actual life by no means entitle him to such a distinction.

In the *Inflexible Prince* we have a faithful, as well as a lively, picture of the conditions under which warfare was conducted between the Moors and Iberians, when chivalry mingled with brutality amid these disciples of

the crescent and the cross. The Christian was not more firm in his constancy than the Mohammedan, not more inflexible in his belief. The characters are well worked out, albeit the patience of Fernando under sufferings that amounted to torture are somewhat overdrawn. If such a prince really existed in the degenerate days of Philip IV history does not record it.

Calderon's Spectacular and Religious Plays.

Calderon has been called the Shakespeare of the Spaniards; but the drama of Spain, and especially of Calderon, is *sui generis*. The art of Calderon attains its purpose not less completely than that of Shakespeare or Sophocles, and all that can be said against it is that this purpose is less elevated. It falls below the art of Greece, inasmuch as it makes no pretension to represent the ideal either of divinity or manhood; and below the art of Shakespeare, inasmuch as, instead of offering a mirror to a universal nature, it is restricted to the representation or poetic expression of a temporary or accidental phase of humanity. It would be a waste of time to contrast the conventional uniformity of his pieces, reducible to five or six types at most, with Shakespeare's infinite variety, the faint individualization of his characters with Shakespeare's miraculous subtlety; his class prejudices with Shakespeare's universal sympathy; his stereotyped cast of thought with Shakespeare's comprehensive wisdom. Greatly as he is admired and widely as he is read, he has not contributed a single appreciable element to the literature of any country but

his own, while Shakespeare has revolutionized the taste of Europe. His relation to his contemporaries is also different to Shakespeare's. The latter is a sun among stars; the former the brightest star of a group.

We shall best do justice to Calderon, not by instituting a vain comparison with Shakespeare, or even with Goethe, whom he more closely resembles, but by regarding those qualities in which he specially excels. Nothing can surpass the fertility, ingenuity and consistency of his constructive faculty, the affluence of his imagery and the melody of his versification. In him the poet and playwright are happily combined; the development of his plots holds the spectator in suspense from first to last, and the diction, except in designedly comic passages, seldom falls below the standard of dignified verse. The interminable length of many of his speeches is certainly a fault, and this is due in part to the fluency of his metre. As a tragic poet we must allow him power, but without any philosophical view of human nature or destiny. As a comic poet he excels in situation; but his dialogue is almost void of humor. His proper and peculiar sphere is that of the fancifully poetical, and in this direction his invention is equal to any feat of construction. Except for Shakespeare and Aristophanes, no dramatist understood so well how to transport his reader or spectator to an ideal world.

A Brilliant Drama.

The Wonderful Magician, one of his most brilliant and popular plays, is best known to American and Eng-

lish readers from the spirited translation of Shelley, though either from carelessness or an imperfect knowledge of Spanish, he is often unfaithful to the meaning of his author. Its subject—the voluntary surrender of a human soul to the Evil One—offers striking analogies and equally strong contrasts to *Faust*, and in a comparison of the two dramas there is much of interest and instruction.

The scene is in Antioch and the characters are Cyprian, a student; the wonder-working demon; Lælius, son of the governor of Antioch; Florus, his friend; Moscon and Clarin, servants of Cyprian; the governor of Antioch; Fabius, his servant; Lysander, the reputed father of Justina; Justina, and Livia, her maid.

In the fourth scene of the first act Lælius and Florus have quarreled over Justina, and are about to fight a duel in the presence of Cyprian:

Lælius.—Further let us not proceed;
For these rocks, these boughs so thickly
Interwoven, that the sun
Cannot even find admittance,
Shall be the sole witnesses
Of our duel.

Florus.— Then, this instant
Draw your sword; for here are deeds,
If in words elsewhere we've striven.

Læl.—Yes, I know that in the field,
While the tongue is mute, the glitter
Of the sword speaks thus. (They fight.)

Cyprian.— What's this?
Hold, good Florus! Lælius, listen!—
Here until your rage is calmed,
Even unarmed I stand betwixt ye.

Lael.—Thus to interrupt my vengeance,
Whence, O Cyprian, have you risen
Like a spectre?

Flo.— A wild wood-god,
Have you from these tree-trunks issued?

SCENE V.

Enter Moscon and Clarin.

Moscon.—Yonder, where we left our master,
I hear sword-strokes; run, run quickly.

Clarin.—Well, except to run away,
I am anything but nimble;—
Truly a retiring person.

Moscon and Clarin.— Sir. . . .

Cyprian.—No more: your gabble irks me.—
How? What's this? Two noble friends,
Who in blood, in birth, in lineage,
Are to-day of Antioch all
Its expectancy, the city's
Eye of fashion, one the son
Of the governor, of the princely
House Colalto, one the heir,
Thus to peril, as of little
Value, two such precious lives
To their country and their kindred?

Cyprian asks the cause of their feud, promising that if, on hearing it, satisfaction must be given, he will leave them unobserved:

Laelius.—Then on this condition solely,
That you leave us, when the bitter
Truth is told, to end our quarrel,

I to tell the cause am willing.
I a certain lady love,
The same lady as his mistress
Florus also loves; now see,
How incompatible are our wishes!—
Since betwixt two jealous nobles
No mediation is admitted.

Florus.—I this lady love so much
That the sunlight I would hinder
From beholding her sweet face.
Since then all interposition
Is in vain, pray stand aside,
And our quarrel let us finish.

Cyprian.—Stay, for one more thing I'd know.
Tell me this of your fair mistress,
Is she possible to your hopes,
Or impossible to your wishes?—

Læl.—Oh: she is so good and wise
That if even the sun enkindled
Jealousy in the heart of Florus,
It was jealousy pure and simple,
Without cause, for even the sun
Dare not look upon her visage.

Cyp.—Would you marry with her, then?

Flo.—This is all my heart's ambition.

Cyp.—And would you?

Læl.— Ah, would to heaven

I were destined for such blisses!—
For, although she's very poor,
Virtue dowers her with its riches.

Cyp.—If you both aspire to wed her,
Is it not an act most wicked,
Most unworthy, thus beforehand
Her unspotted fame to injure?
What will say the world, if one
Of you two shall marry with her
After having killed the other
For her sake?

Cyprian offers to intercede for them with the lady,
and the duelists sheathe their swords.

Cyprian.—On, of course, the supposition,
That this lady you pay court to
Suffers naught by the admission,
Since you both have spoken proudly
Of her virtue and her strictness,
Tell me who she is; for I,
Who am held throughout the city
In esteem, would for you both
Speak to her at first a little,
That she thus may be prepared
When her father tells your wishes.

Lælius.—You are right.

Cyp.— Her name?

Florus.— Justina,
Daughter of Lysander.

Cyp.— Little,
Now that I have heard her name,
Seem the praises you have given her;
She is virtuous as she's noble.
Instantly I'll pay my visit.

Flo.—(Aside.) May heaven grant that in my favor
Her cold heart be moved to pity! (Exit.)

Læli.—Love, my hopes with laurels crown
When they are to her submitted! (Exit.)

Cyp.—Further mischief or misfortune,
Grant me, heaven, that I may hinder! (Exit.)

Moscon and Clarin, servants of Cyprian, are in love
with Livia, Justina's maid.

Moscon.—Has your worship heard our master
Now is gone to pay a visit
To Justina?

Clarín.—Yes, my lord.

But what matter if he didn't?

Mos.—Matter quite enough, your worship;

He has no business there.

Cla.—

Why, prithee?

Mos.—Why? because I die for Livia,

Who is maid to this Justina,

And I wouldn't have even the sun

Get a glimpse of her through the window.

Cla.—Well, that's good; but, for a lady,

To contend were worse than silly,

Whom I mean to make my wife.

Mos.—Excellent, faith! the fancy tickles

Quite my fancy. Let her say

Who is it that annoys or nicks her

To a nicety. Let's go see her,

And she'll choose.

Cla.—

A good idea!—

Though I fear she'll pitch on you.

Mos.—Have you, then, that wise suspicion?

Cla.—Yes; for always these same Livias

Choose the worst, th' ungrateful minxes.

Cyprian pleads the cause of Florus and Lælius, and then his own; but she will have none of them.

Justina.—Half in wonder and dismay

At the vile address you make me,

Reason, speech, alike forsake me,

And I know not what to say.

Never in the slightest way

Have your clients had from me

Encouragement for this embassy—

Florus never—Lælius no:—

Of the scorn that I can show

Let then this a warning be.

Cyprian.—If I, knowing that you loved

Some one else, would dare to seek
Your regard, my love were weak,
And could justly be reproved.
But here seeing you stand unmoved,
Like a rock 'mid raging seas,
No extraneous miseries
Make me say I love you now.
'Tis not for my friends I bow,
So your warning hear with ease.—
To Lælius what shall I say?

Jus.— That he
Well may trust the boding fears
Of his love of many years.

Cyp.—To Florus?

Jus.— Not my face to see.

Cyp.—And to myself?

Jus.— Your love should be
Not so bold.

Cyp.—Though a god should woo?

Jus.—Will a god do more for you
Than for those I have denied?

Cyp.—Yes.

Jus.— Well then, I have replied
To Lælius, Florus and to you.

(Exeunt Justina and Cyprian at opposite sides.)

In the following scene Clarin and Moscon make love to Livia:

Clarín.—Livia, heigh!

Moscon.— And Livia, ho!—
List, good lass.

Cla.—We're here, we two.

Livia.—Well, what want you, sir? And you,
What do you want?

Cla.— We both would show,
 If perchance you do not know,
 That we love you to distraction.
 On a murderous transaction
 We came here, to kill each other:—
 So to put an end to the bother,
 Just choose one for satisfaction.

Liv.—Why, the thing that you're demanding
 Is so great, it hath bereft me
 Of my wits. My grief hath left me
 Without sense or understanding.
 Choose but one! My heart expanding,
 Beats so hard a strain to shun!
 I one only! 'Tis for fun
 That you ask me so to do.
 For with heart enough for two,
 Why require that I choose one?

Cla.—Two at once would you have to woo?
 Would not two embarrass you, pray?

Liv.—No, we women have a way
 To dispose of them two by two.

Mos.—What's the way? do tell us, do;—
 What is it? speak.

Liv.— You put one out!—
 I would love them, do not doubt. . . .

Mos.—How?

Liv.— Alternately.

Cla.— Eh,
 What's alternately?

Liv.— 'Tis to say,
 That I would love them day about.

(Exit.)

Mos.—Well, I choose to-day: good-bye.

Cla.—I, to-morrow, the better part.
 So I give it with all my heart.

Mos.—Livia, in fine, for whom I die,
 To-day loves me, and to-day love I.
 Happy is he who so much can say.

Cla.—Hearken, my friend: you know my way.

Mos.—Why this speech? Does a threat lie in it?

Cla.—Mind, she is not yours a minute

After the clock strikes twelve to-day.

(*Exeunt.*)

Cyprian again makes love to Justina and is again repulsed, though not, as it seems, through want of regard for him, declaring,

Fate forbids that I should love thee,
Cyprian, except in death.

Then comes another scene between Moscon, Clarin and Livia:

Clarin.—Livia, while my master yonder,
Like a living skeleton,
Life and motion being gone,
On his luckless love doth ponder,
Give me an embrace.

Livia.— Stay, stay.
Patience, man! until I see,
For I like my conscience free,
If to-day is your right day.—
Tuesday, yes, and Wednesday, no.

Cla.—What are you counting there? Awake!
Moscon's mum.

Liv.— He might mistake,
And I wish not to act so.
For, desiring to pursue
A just course betwixt you both,
Turn about, I would be loth
Not to give you each his due.
But I see that you are right,
'Tis your day.

Cla.— Embrace me, then.

Liv.—Yes, again, and yet again.

Moscon.—Hark to me, my lady bright,
 May I from your ardor borrow
 A good omen in my case;
 And as Clarin you embrace,
 Moscon you'll embrace to-morrow?

Liv.—Your suspicion is, in fact,
 Quite absurd; on me rely.
 Jupiter forbid that I
 Should commit so bad an act
 As to be cool in any way
 To a friend. I will to thee
 Give an embrace in equity,
 When it is your worship's day.

Cyprian, inspired by the demon, is seized with an uncontrollable passion for Justina, as he thus declares in lines thus rendered in Shelley's translation, and from which, it would appear, were suggested scenes in *Faust*:

So bitter is the life I live
 That, hear me, Hell! I now would give
 To thy most detested spirit
 My soul, forever to inherit,
 To suffer punishment and pine,
 So this woman may be mine.
 Hear'st thou, Hell! dost thou reject it?
 My soul is offered!

Demon.—(Unseen.) I accept it.
 (Tempest, with thunder and lightning.)

Cyprian.—What is this? ye heavens forever pure,
 At once intensely radiant and obscure!
 Athwart the ætherial halls
 The lightning's arrow and the thunder-balls
 The day affright.
 As from the horizon round,
 Burst with earthquake's sound,

In mighty torrents the electric fountains;—
 Clouds quench the sun, and thunder smoke
 Strangles the air, and fire eclipses heaven.
 Philosophy, thou canst not even
 Compel their causes underneath thy yoke.
 From yonder clouds even to the waves below
 The fragments of a single ruin choke
 Imagination's flight;
 For, on flakes of surge, like feathers light,
 The ashes of the desolation cast
 Upon the gloomy blast,
 Tell of the footsteps of the storm.
 And nearer see the melancholy form
 Of a great ship, the outcast of the sea,
 Drives miserably!

Presently the demon enters, as though escaped from the sea, and after some discourse with Cyprian, reveals to him his real personality.

In my attributes I stood
 So high and so heroically great,
 In lineage so supreme, and with a genius
 Which penetrated with a glance the world
 Beneath my feet, that won by my high merit
 A king—whom I may call the king of kings,
 Because all others tremble in their pride
 Before the terrors of his countenance,
 In his high palace roofed with brightest gems
 Of living light—call them the stars of Heaven—
 Named me his counselor. But the high praise
 Stung me with pride and envy, and I rose
 In mighty competition, to ascend
 His seat, and place my foot triumphantly
 Upon his subject thrones. Chastised, I know
 The depth to which ambition falls; too mad
 Was the attempt, and yet more mad were now
 Repentance of the irrevocable deed:—

Therefore I chose this ruin with the glory
Of not to be subdued, before the shame
Of reconciling me with him who reigns
By coward cession.—Nor was I alone,
Nor am I now, nor shall I be alone;
And there was hope, and there may still be hope;
For many suffrages among his vassals
Hailed me their lord and king, and many still
Are mine, and many more perchance shall be.
Thus vanquished, though in fact victorious,
I left his seat of empire, from mine eye
Shooting forth poisonous lightning, while my words
With inauspicious thunderings shook Heaven,
Proclaiming vengeance, public as my wrong,
And imprecating on his prostrate slaves
Rapine and death and outrage. Then I sailed
Over the mighty fabric of the world,
A pirate ambushed in its pathless sands,
A lynx crouched watchfully among its caves
And craggy shores; and I have wandered over
The expanse of these wide, glassy wildernesses
In this great ship, whose bulk is now dissolved
In the light breathings of the invisible wind,
And which the sea has made a dustless ruin,
Seeking forever a mountain, through whose forests
I seek a man, whom I must now compel
To keep his word with me. I came arrayed
In tempest, and although my power could well
Bridle the forest winds in their career,
For other causes I forbore to soothe
Their fury to Favonian gentleness;
I could and would not;—thus I wake in him (Aside.)
A love of magic art.—Let not this tempest,
Nor the succeeding calm excite thy wonder;
For by my art the sun would turn as pale
As his weak sister with unwonted fear.
And in my wisdom are the orbs of Heaven
Written as in a record; I have pierced
The flaming circles of their wondrous spheres,
And know them as thou knowest every corner

Of this dim spot. Let it not seem to thee
 That I boast vainly; wouldst thou that I work
 A charm over this waste and savage wood,
 This Babylon of crags and agèd trees,
 Filling its leafy coverts with a horror
 Thrilling and strange? I am the friendless guest
 Of these wild oaks and pines—and as from thee
 I have received the hospitality
 Of this rude place, I offer thee the fruit
 Of years of toil in recompense; whate'er
 The wildest dream presented to thy thought
 As object of desire, that shall be thine.

* * * * *

In another scene the demon tempts Justina, who is a Christian.

Demon.—Abyss of Hell! I call on thee,
 Thou wild misrule of thine own anarchy!
 From thy prison-house set free
 The spirits of voluptuous death,
 That with their mighty breath
 They may destroy a world of virgin thoughts;
 Let her chaste mind with fancies thick as motes
 Be peopled from thy shadowy deep,
 Till her guilty phantasy
 Full to overflowing be!
 And with sweetest harmony,
 Let birds, and flowers, and leaves, and all things move
 To love, only to love.
 Let nothing meet her eyes
 But signs of love's soft victories;
 Let nothing meet her ear
 But sounds of love's sweet sorrow,
 So that from faith no succor she may borrow,
 But, guided by my spirit blind
 And in a magic snare entwined,
 She may now seek Cyprian.

Begin, while I in silence bind
My voice, when thy sweet song thou hast begun.

A voice within.—What is the glory far above
All else in human life?

All.— Love! love!

(While these words are sung, the demon goes out at
one door and Justina enters at another.)

The first voice.—There is no form in which the fire
Of love its traces has impressed not.
Man lives far more in love's desire
Than by life's breath, soon possessed not.
If all that lives must love or die,
All shapes on earth, or sea, or sky,
With one consent to heaven cry
That the glory far above
All else in life is——

All.— Love! O love!

Justina.—Thou melancholy thought which art
So flattering and so sweet, to thee,
When did I give the liberty
Thus to afflict my heart?
What is the cause of this new power
Which doth my fevered being move,
Momently raging more and more?
What subtle pain is kindled now
Which from my heart doth overflow
Into my senses?—

All.— Love! O love!

Jus.—'Tis that enamored nightingale
Who gives me the reply;
He ever tells the same soft tale
Of passion and of constancy
To his mate, who, rapt and fond,
Listening sits, a bough beyond.

Be silent, nightingale—no more
Make me think, in hearing thee .
Thus tenderly thy love deplore,
If a bird can feel his so,

What a man would feel for me.

And, voluptuous vine, O thou
Who seekest most when least pursuing,—
To the trunk thou interlacest
Art the verdure which embracest,
And the weight which is its ruin,—
No more, with green embraces, vine,
Make me think on what thou lovest,—
For whilst thus thy boughs entwine,
I fear lest thou should'st teach me, sophist,
How arms might be entangled, too.

Light-enchanted sunflower, thou
Who gazest ever true and tender
On the sun's revolving splendor!
Follow not his faithless glance
With thy faded countenance,
Nor teach my beating heart to fear,
If leaves can mourn without a tear,
How eyes must weep! O nightingale,
Cease from thy enamored tale,—
Leafy vine, unwreath thy bower,
Restless sunflower, cease to move,—
Or tell me all, what poisonous power
Ye use against me——

All.—

Love! love! love!

Jus.—It cannot be!—Whom have I ever loved?

Trophies of my oblivion and disdain,
Floro and Lelio did I not reject?
And Cyprian?——

(She becomes troubled at the name of Cyprian.)

Did I not requite him

With such severity that he has fled
Where none have ever heard of him again?—
Alas! I now begin to fear that this
May be the occasion whence desire grows bold,
As if there were no danger. From the moment
That I pronounced to my own listening heart,
Cyprian is absent, O me miserable!

I know not what I feel!

(More calmly.)

It must be pity

To think that such a man, whom all the world

Admired, should be forgot by all the world,

And I the cause. (She again becomes troubled.)

And yet if it were pity,

Floro and Lelio might have equal share,

For they are both imprisoned for my sake. (Calmly.)

Alas! what reasonings are these? it is

Enough I pity him, and that, in vain,

Without this ceremonious subtlety.

And woe to me! I know not where to find him now,

Even should I seek him through this wide world.

Enter Demon.

Demon.—Follow, and I will lead thee where he is.

Justina.—And who art thou, who hast found entrance hither,

Into my chamber through the doors and locks?

Art thou a monstrous shadow which my madness

Has formed in the idle air?

Dem.—

No. I am one

Called by the thought which tyrannizes thee

From his eternal dwelling; who this day

Is pledged to bear thee unto Cyprian.

Jus.—So shall thy promise fail. This agony

Of passion which afflicts my heart and soul

May sweep imagination in its storm;

The will is firm.

Dem.—

Already half is done

In the imagination of an act.

The sin incurred, the pleasure then remains;

Let not the will stop half-way on the road.

Jus.—I will not be discouraged, nor despair,

Although I thought it, and although 'tis true

That thought is but a prelude to the deed:—

Thought is not in my power, but action is:

I will not move my foot to follow thee.

Dem.—But a far mightier wisdom than thine own

Exerts itself within thee, with such power
Compelling thee to that which it inclines
That it shall force thy step; how wilt thou then
Resist, Justina?

Jus.— By my free-will.

Dem.— I
Must force thy will.

Jus.— It is invincible;
It were not free if thou hadst power upon it.
(He draws, but cannot move her.)

Dem.—Come, where a pleasure waits thee.

Jus.— It were bought
Too dear.

Dem.— 'Twill soothe thy heart to softest peace.

Jus.—'Tis dread captivity.

Dem.— 'Tis joy, 'tis glory.

Jus.—'Tis shame, 'tis torment, 'tis despair.

Dem.— But how
Canst thou defend thyself from that or me,
If my power drags thee onward?

Jus.— My defense
Consists in God.

(He vainly endeavors to force her, and at last releases her.)

Dem.— Woman, thou hast subdued me,
Only by not owning thyself subdued.
But since thou thus findest defense in God,
I will assume a feigned form, and thus
Make thee a victim of my baffled rage.
For I will mask a spirit in thy form
Who will betray thy name to infamy,
And doubly shall triumph in thy loss,
First by dishonoring thee, and then by turning
False pleasure to true ignominy. (Exit.)

Jus.— I
Appeal to Heaven against thee; so that Heaven
May scatter thy delusions, and the blot
Upon my fame vanish in idle thought,

Even as flame dies in the envious air,
 And as the floweret wanes at morning frost,
 And thou shouldst never—— But, alas! to whom
 Do I still speak?—Did not a man but now
 Stand here before me?—No, I am alone,
 And yet I saw him. Is he gone so quickly?
 Or can the heated mind engender shapes
 From its own fear? Some terrible and strange
 Peril is near. Lisander! father! lord!
 Livia!—

Enter Lisander and Livia.

Lisander.—O my daughter! What?

Livia.— What?

Justina.— Saw you

A man go forth from my apartment now?—
 I scarce contain myself!

Lis.— A man here!

Jus.—Have you not seen him?

Liv.— No, lady.

Jus.—I saw him.

Lis.— 'Tis impossible; the doors
 Which lead to this department were all locked.

Liv.—(Aside.) I dare say it was Moscon whom she saw,
 For he was locked up in my room.

Lis.— It must

Have been some image of thy phantasy.
 Such melancholy as thou feedest is
 Skillful in forming such in the vain air
 Out of the motes and atoms of the day.

Liv.—My master's in the right.

Jus.— O would it were

Delusion; but I fear some greater ill.
 I feel as if out of my bleeding bosom
 My heart was torn in fragments; aye,
 Some mortal spell is wrought against my frame;
 So potent was the charm, that had not God
 Shielded my humble innocence from wrong,

I should have sought my sorrow and my shame
 With willing steps.—Livia, quick, bring my cloak,
 For I must seek refuge from these extremes
 Even in the temple of the highest God
 Where secretly the faithful worship.

Liv.—

Here.

Jus.—(Putting on her cloak.) In this, as in a shroud of snow,
 may I

Quench the consuming fire in which I burn,
 Wasting away!

Lis.—

And I will go with thee.

Liv.—When I once see them safe out of the house
 I shall breathe freely.

Jus.—

So do I confide

In thy just favor, Heaven!

Lis.—

Let us go.

Jus.—Thine is the cause, great God! turn for my sake,
 And for thine own, mercifully to me!

The demon renews his compact with Cyprian, who signs a bond written on a piece of linen with the point of a dagger dipped in his own blood. Presently appears a phantom figure of Justina, which Cyprian embraces and carries in his arms, exclaiming:

Now, O beautiful Justina,
 In this sweet and secret covert,
 Where no beam of sun can enter,
 Nor the breeze of heaven blow roughly,
 Now the trophy of thy beauty
 Makes my magic toils triumphant,
 For here; folding thee, no longer
 Have I need to fear disturbance.
 Fair Justina, thou hast cost me
 Even my soul. But in my judgment,
 Since the gain has been so glorious,

Not so dear has been the purchase.
Oh! unveil thyself, fair goddess,
Not in clouds obscure and murky,
Not in clouds obscure the sun,
Show its golden rays effulgent.

Cyprian then draws aside the cloak and discovers a skeleton, which tells him :

Cyprian, such are all the glories
Of the world that you so covet.

In the final scenes Justina and Cyprian are sentenced to death for worshipping the God of the Christians. Their bodies are exposed on the scaffold, over which the demon appears astride of a winged serpent, and thus makes confession :

Hear, O mortals, hear what I,
By the orders of high Heaven,
For Justina's exculpation,
Must declare to all here present.
I it was who, to dishonor
Her pure fame, in form dissembled
For the purpose, scaled her house,
And her very chamber entered.
And in order that her fame
Should not by that fraud be lessened,
I come here her injured honor
To exhibit pure and perfect.
Cyprian, who with her lieth,
On a happy bier at rest there,
Was my slave. But he effacing,
With the blood his neck outsheddeth
The red signature, the linen
Is now spotless and unblemished.

And the two, in spite of me,
Having to the spheres ascended
Of the sacred throne of God,
Live there in a world far better.—
This, then, is the truth, which I
Tell, because God made me tell it,
Much against my will, my practice
Not being great as a truth-teller.

The demon then sinks into the ground, and the play ends amid the terror of the assembled multitude.

La Aurora En Copacabana.

The discovery and conquest of the New World have at all times been a favorite theme with Spanish poets. The Castilians prided themselves on being Christians and warriors, and the massacre of infidel nations appeared to them to extend at the same time the kingdom of God and of Spain. Calderon chose as the subject of one of his dramas the discovery and conversion of Peru, and this he entitled *La Aurora en Copacavana*, from the name of one of the sacred temples of the Incas, where the first cross was planted by the companions of Pizarro. The admirers of Calderon extol this as one of his finest efforts, as animated by the purest and most elevated enthusiasm. A series of brilliant objects is indeed presented to the eyes and to the mind. On one side, the devotions of the Indians are celebrated at Copacavana with a pomp and magnificence which are not so much derived from the music and the decorations as from the splendor and poetic elevation of the language. On the

other side, the first arrival of Pizarro on the shore, and the terror of the natives, who take the vessel for some unknown monster of the deep, whose bellowings they imagine to be the thunder of the skies, are rendered with equal truth and richness of imagination. To avert the calamities which these strange prodigies announce, the gods of America demand a human victim. They make choice of Guacolda, one of their priestesses, who is an object of love to the Inca and to the hero Jupanguí. Idolatry, represented by Calderon as a real being, who continually dazzles the Indians by false miracles, herself solicits this sacrifice. She obtains the consent of the terrified Inca, while Jupanguí withdraws his mistress from the priests of the false gods, and places her in safety. The alarm of Guacolda, the devotion of her lover, and the danger of the situation, which gradually increases, give to the scene an agreeable and romantic interest, which, however, leads us almost to forget Pizarro and his companions-in-arms.

In the second act both the interest and action are entirely changed. We behold Pizarro, with the Spaniards, assaulting the walls of Cuzco, the Indians defending them, and the Virgin Mary assisting the assailants and saving Pizarro, who is precipitated from the summit of a scaling ladder by the fragment of a rock, but rises without injury and returns to the combat. In another scene the Spaniards, already masters of Cuzco, are reposing in a palace built of wood; the Indians set fire to it, but the Virgin, invited by Pizarro, comes again to his aid; she appears amid a choir of angels, and pours on the flames torrents of water and snow. This

vision appears also to Jupangui as he leads the Indians to an attack on the Spaniards. He is converted, and, addressing the Virgin in a moment of danger, when the asylum of his mistress is discovered, she takes them under her protection and conceals them both from their enemies.

This new miracle gives rise to the incidents of the third act, apparently founded on the legend of Copacavana. Peru has wholly submitted to the king of Spain, and is converted, while Jupangui has no other desire or thought than to form an image of the Virgin similar to the apparition which he saw in the clouds. Notwithstanding his ignorance of art, and of the use of the requisite instruments, he labors incessantly; but his rude attempts only expose him to the derision of his companions. The latter refuse to allow a statue of so grotesque an appearance to be deposited in a temple, and Jupangui undergoes all sorts of disappointments and mortifications, even to the threatened destruction of his image. At length the Virgin, touched by his faith and perseverance, dispatches two angels to his assistance, who, one with chisels and the other with pencils and colors, retouch the statue and render it a perfect likeness of its divine original. The festival which solemnizes this miracle terminates the scene.

With all its merits, this tragedy of Calderon is inferior to the *Arauco Domado* of Lopé de Vega, with which it may properly be compared. The greater elegance of versification in the former is not sufficient to atone for the violation of the essential rules of art, and of those founded on nature itself. The author perpetually di-

verts our attention to new subjects, without ever satisfying us. Not to mention the interest which might have been excited for the flourishing empire of the Incas, which is introduced to us in the midst of its religious rites, and which falls, we know not how, Pizarro appears, landing for the first time among the natives of Peru; but no sooner do we begin to mark the contrast between these two distinct races of men, than the scene is suddenly withdrawn from us. The love of Jupangui and Guacolda excites in us, in its turn, a romantic interest, but it is abandoned long before the close of the piece. The struggle between a conquering and a conquered people might have developed instances of valor and heroism, and produced scenes both noble and affecting; but we have only a glimpse of this contest, which is suddenly terminated by a miracle. A subject altogether new then commences with the conversion of Jupangui and his attempt to fashion the miraculous image. Fresh personages enter on the scene; we find ourselves in an unknown world; the new-born zeal of the converted Peruvians is beyond our conception; all the feelings previously awakened in us become enfeebled or extinguished, and those which the poet wishes to excite in us in the third act are not really felt in the heart.

In truth, it is difficult to account for the admiration bestowed by critics of unquestioned celebrity on a play so full of defects. Intimately acquainted, as they were, with the ancient and modern drama, and accustomed to appreciate the perfect productions of the Greeks, how is it possible that they could be blind to the glaring

faults of these ill-connected scenes? But, in fact, it is not in the capacity of critics that they have judged the Spanish stage. They have extolled it rather because they find in every page the religious zeal which appears to them so chivalric and poetical; so that the enthusiasm of Jupangui redeems in their eyes all the faults of the *Aurora en Copacavana*. But rank in literature is not to be regulated by religion; and, indeed, if it were, these neophytes would probably find themselves disarmed by the very church whose tenets they have embraced, when they applaud a fanaticism which at this day she herself disavows.

The Virgin of the Sanctuary.

As to unity of subject and time, Calderon's treatment differed essentially from that of other great masters, and this is apparent in all his dramas; but there is one that may especially be noticed for the eccentricity of its plan. It is entitled *The Origin, Loss and Restoration of the Virgin of the Sanctuary*, and was composed to celebrate the festival, on the stage as well as in the church, of a miraculous image of the Virgin which was preserved in the cathedral at Toledo. Like all Spanish comedies—if we may call them so—it is divided into three acts, but the first is placed in the seventh century, under the reign of Recesuindo, king of the Visigoths; the second is in the eighth century, during the conquest of Spain by Aben Tariffa, and the third is in the eleventh century, at the time when Alfonso VI recovered Toledo from the Moors. The unity of the piece, if such

there is, rests on the history of the miraculous image, on which depends the destiny of Spain. As to the rest, the personages, the action and the interest vary in every act.

The first act discovers to us the bishop of Toledo, St. Ildefonso, who, with the authority of King Recesuindo, establishes a festival in honor of this image, worshipped from the remotest period in the church of Toledo. He relates the origin of Toledo, founded, as he says, by Nebuchadnezzar. In this city, the primitive church worshipped the same Virgin of the sanctuary which the Saint now offers afresh for the adoration of the Christians. His victory over the heresiarch Pelagius is celebrated at the same time. Pelagius himself appears in the piece as an object of persecution to the people and the priests, and to give to the Spaniards a foretaste of their Autos da fé. His heresy, which, according to ecclesiastical history, consists in obscure opinions on grace and predestination, is represented by Calderon as treason against the majesty of the Virgin, as he is accused of denying the immaculate conception. The poet supposes that he wishes to possess himself of the image by theft. He is prevented by a miracle; the Virgin comes to the aid of her representative; she terrifies the sacrilegious intruder; she encourages St. Ildefonso, and announces to the miraculous image that it must be long concealed and pass several ages in darkness.

It is difficult to imagine what advantage Calderon found in mingling such gross anachronisms with his narrations, especially in his religious pieces. The long discourse of St. Ildefonso on the origin of the miraculous image commences thus: "Cosmography, which measures

the earth and the heavens, divides the globe into four parts: Africa, Asia and America are the three first, of which I have not occasion at present to speak, but which the learned Herodotus has fully described; the fourth is our Europe." Calderon must surely have known that America was discovered only about a hundred years before he was born, and that neither Herodotus nor St. Ildefonso could possibly have spoken of it.

In the second act Tariffa is seen with the Moors, besieging Toledo. Calderon conducts him to the walls of the city, where he recounts to the besieged, in a speech of eleven stanzas, the fall of the monarchy of the Goths, the defeat of Rodrigo at Xeres, and the triumph of the Mussulmans. Godman, governor of the city, replies in a speech equally as long, that the Christians of Toledo will perish on the ramparts rather than surrender. At length Donna Sancha, who, in the name of all the inhabitants, makes a speech longer than either, prevails on Godman to capitulate. A part of the Christians retire to the Asturias; but the miraculous image of Sagrario will not permit itself to be carried away by the archbishop. It remains for the purpose of comforting the people of Toledo in their captivity, and the prelate leaves it on the altar. In the articles of capitulation Godman obtains liberty of conscience for the Christians, who gradually become intermingled with the Arabs, and, to preserve the statue, the ex-governor hides it at the bottom of a well.

In the third act we behold Alfonso VI in the midst of his court and knights, receiving the capitulation of the Moors of Toledo, and engaging by oath to grant

BAPTISM OF POLONIA AND LESBLA

After an original painting by D. Etcheverry



them religious liberty, and to leave for the worship of the Mussulmans, the largest mosque in the city. We also see the origin of the dispute, which was ultimately decided by a duel, as to the preference of the Mocarabian or Catholic rites. Alfonso, wishing to extend his conquests, leaves his wife, Constance, in charge of the city in his absence. Sacrificing every other consideration to her religious zeal, she violates the terms of the capitulation with the Moors, deprives them of their mosque and restores to its place the miraculous image of the Virgin. Alfonso, at first, is highly indignant at this proceeding, and promises the deputies of the Moors, who prefer their complaints to him, to chastise his wife, to restore the mosque to the Moors, and to punish all who had broken their oaths. But when Constance appears before him to implore his pardon, the Virgin surrounds her with a celestial glory; she dazzles the king, and convinces him, to the great delight of the spectators, that it is an unpardonable crime to keep faith with heretics.

Notwithstanding the religious character of the play, it is as much interspersed with low scenes as all the rest. There are boisterous peasants in the first act, drunken Moors in the second and pages in the third, whose business it is to entertain the pit, and to enliven, by their occasional witticisms, the too great solemnity of the subject.

Purgatory of St. Patricius.

For his *Purgatory of St. Patrick* Calderon was indebted to a little volume published at Madrid, in 1627,

by Juan Perez de Montalvan, and entitled *Vida y Purgatorio de San Patricio*. It met with immense success, passed through innumerable editions and was reprinted in Spain as a chap-book within recent years. It was also translated into German, Dutch, Italian and Portuguese; but there is no English version, though the translation from Calderon almost reproduces the language of Montalvan.

The scene is in Ireland, where, at the opening, King Egerius appears on a rocky seashore, with his daughters, Polonia and Lesbia, and a certain captain. The king is contemplating suicide, tormented by an evil dream that constantly haunts him:

Every torment that doth dwell
 Forever with the thirsty fiends of hell—
 Dark brood of that dread mother,
 The seven-necked snake, whose poisoned breath doth
 smother
 The fourth celestial sphere;
 In fine its horror and its misery drear
 Within me reach so far,
 That I myself upon myself make war.
 When in the arms of sleep
 A living corpse am I, for it doth keep
 Such mastery o'er my life that, as I dream,
 A pale foreshadowing threat of coming death I seem.

Polonia.—How could a dream, my lord, provoke you so?

King.—Alas! my daughters, listen, you shall know.

From out the lips of a most lovely youth
 —And though a miserable slave, in sooth
 I dare not hurt him, and I speak his praise—
 Well, from the mouth of a poor slave, a blaze
 Of lambent lustre came,
 Which mildly burned in rays of gentlest flame;

Till reaching you,
The living fire at once consumed ye two.

Presently the sound of a trumpet announces the approach of a ship, and St. Patrick and Luis Enius are cast ashore, clasping each other as having escaped from drowning:

Patrick.—Oh, God save me!

Luis.—Oh, the devil save me!

Lesbia.—They move my pity, these unhappy two.

King.—Not mine, for what it is I never knew.

Pat.—Oh, sirs, if wretchedness
Can move most hearts to pity man's distress,
I will not think that here
A heart can be so cruel and severe
As to repel a wretch from out the wave.
Pity, for God's sake, at your feet I crave.

Luis.—I don't, for I disdain it.
From God or man I never hope to gain it.

King.—Say who you are; we then shall know
What hospitable care your needs we owe.

But first the king reveals his own identity as absolute sovereign of the realm:

No god my worship claims;
I do not even know the deities' names,
Here they no service nor respect receive;
To die and to be born is all that we believe.

St. Patrick then tells the story of his birth, that he is the son of a French lady and an Irish cavalier, and was born at a small hamlet in Ireland, "midway 'twixt

the north and west, and scarcely known to man." He was educated by "a very holy matron"—his aunt, according to Montalvan's story—and at a very early age was chosen of God to work miracles. One day, while at the seashore with some fellow-students, he was captured by the pirate, Philip de Roqui, who was ravaging the Irish coast, and was reserved to be offered as a slave to the king, whose kindness he now supplicates:

Since we are your slaves and servants,
That being moved by our disasters,
That being softened by our weeping,
Our sore plight may melt your kindness,
And our very pains command you.

But the king answers him sternly:

Silence, miserable Christian,
For my very soul seems fastened
On thy words, compelling me,
How I know not, to regard thee
With strange reverence and fear,
Thinking thou must be that vassal—
That poor slave whom in my dream
I beheld outbreathing flashes,
Saw outflashing living fire,
In whose flame, so lithe and lambent,
My Polonia and my Lesbia
Like poor moths were burned to ashes.

Patrick.—Know, the flame that from my mouth
Issued, is the true Evangel,
Is the doctrine of the Gospel:—
'Tis the word which I'm commanded
Unto thee to preach, O king!
To thy subjects and thy vassals,
To thy daughters, who shall be
Christians through its means.

Here he is interrupted by the king:

Cease, fasten
Thy presumptuous lips, vile Christian,
For thy words insult and stab me.

Enius then tells his story—not of miracles, but of

Dark crimes,
Robberies, murders, sacrileges,
Treasons, treacheries, betrayals,

Of sinful and daring deeds, even to the foulest of outrages and the greatest of excesses; so that, as he declares, "all respect has left me." Yet he declares himself a Christian and an Irishman.

The king then takes Enius in his arms, admiring him for his courage; but throws Patrick on the ground and tramples on him:

That thou may'st see
How I value or give credit
To thy threats, thy life I spare.
Vomit forth the flame incessant
Of the so-called word of God,
That by this thou may'st be certain
I do not adore his Godship,
Nor his miracles have dread of.
Live, then; but in such a state
Of poor, mean and abject service
As befits a useless hind
In the fields; and so as shepherd
I would have thee guard my flocks,
Which are in these vales collected.
Let us see, if for the purpose
Of this mystic fire outspreading,

Being my slave, thy God will free thee
From captivity and thy fetters.

Patrick is perfectly resigned to his lowly condition,
as appears in the following adoration:

Lord! how gladly do I live
In this solitary spot,
Where my soul in raptured prayer
May adore thee, or in trance
See the living countenance
Of thy prodigies so rare!
Human wisdom, earthly lore,
Solitude reveals and reaches;
What diviner wisdom teaches
In it, too, I would explore.

His keeper asks him:

Tell me, talking thus apart,
Who is it on whom you call?

Patrick answers with another prayer:

Thou art of all created things,
O Lord, the essence and the cause—
The source and centre of all bliss;
What are those veils of woven light,
Where sun and moon and stars unite—
The purple morn, the spangled night—
But curtains which thy mercy draws
Between the heavenly world and this?
The terrors of the sea and land—
When all the elements conspire,
The earth and water, storm and fire—
Are but the shadows of thy hand;

Do they not all in countless ways—
The lightning's flash—the howling storm—
The dread volcano's awful blaze—
Proclaim thy glory and thy praise?
Beneath the sunny summer showers
Thy love assumes a milder form,
And writes its angel name in flowers;
The wind that flies with winged feet
Around the grassy gladdened earth,
Seems but commissioned to repeat
In echo's accents—silvery sweet—
That thou, O Lord, didst give it birth.
There is a tongue in every flame—
There is a tongue in every wave—
To these the bounteous Godhead gave
These organs but to praise his name!
O mighty Lord of boundless space,
Here canst thou be both sought and found—
For here in everything around,
Thy presence and thy power I trace.
With Faith my guide and my defense,
I burn to serve in love and fear;
If as a slave, Oh, leave me here!
If not, O Lord, remove me hence!

The angel now appears, holding in one hand a shield in which is a mirror, and in the other a letter. In the mirror Patrick sees a great throng of people who seem to call him, and in the letter are the words:

Patrick! Patrick! hither come,
Free us from our slavery!

Then says the angel:

The vocation
God has given thee is to sow

Faith o'er all the Irish soil.
There as legate thou shalt toil,
Ireland's great apostle.

The angel then carries him away, "upborne upon the wind."

Meanwhile, Enius has gained the love of Polonia, and by her is rescued from the death to which he is doomed by the king, not for his crimes, but "for Christ's belief alone," in revenge for the escape of Patrick. Polonia rescues him; they flee together, and Enius thus discloses his purpose:

She must go with me where I,
Seizing on the gold and costly
Gems she carries, so might issue
From this Babylonian bondage.
But a great embarrassment
And a hindrance were a woman
For the end I have in view,
Since in me is love a folly
That ne'er passes appetite,
Which being satisfied, no longer
Care I for a woman's presence,
How so fair or so accomplished.
And since thus my disposition
Is so free, of what importance
Is a murder more or less?
At my hands must die Polonia.

Enius kills Polonia, whose body is discovered by the king and his party, whereupon Patrick appears and restores her to life. Enius, to atone for his crimes, passes through purgatory, the entrance to which is a

convent near a cave in the midst of a precipitous ravine, thus described in *The Cenci* of Shelley, who has here borrowed from Calderon:

And in its depth there is a mighty rock
Which has from unimaginable years
Sustained itself with terror and with toil
Over the gulf, and with the agony
With which it clings seems slowly coming down;
Even as a wretched soul, hour after hour,
Clings to the mass of life: yet, clinging leans,
And leaning, makes more dark the dread abyss
In which it fears to fall. Beneath this crag,
Huge as despair, as if in weariness,
The melancholy mountain yawns.

Thus, in part, Enius relates his experience, in language suggestive of Dante's *Inferno*:

Then I found me in black night,
Whence the light was so ejected
That I closed on it mine eyes.
With my lids thus closed together,
On I went, and felt a wall
Which in front of me extended;
And by following it, and groping
For about the length of twenty
Paces, came upon some rocks,
And perceived through a small crevice
Of this rugged mountain wall
That a doubtful glimmer entered
Of a light that was not light,
As when day the dark disperses.
With quick steps a path pursuing,
By the left-hand side I entered,
When I felt a strange commotion;
The firm earth began to tremble,
And upheaving 'neath my feet,
Ruin and convulsion threatened.

Stupefied I stopped there, when
With a voice that woke my senses
From forgetfulness and fainting,
Loud a thunder-clap reëchoed,
And the ground on which I stood
Bursting open in the centre,
It appeared as if I fell
To a depth where I lay buried
In the loosened stones and earth
Which had after me descended.
Then I found me in a hall
Built of jasper, where the presence
Of the chisel was made known
By its ornate architecture.
Through a door of bronze twelve men
Then advanced and came directly
Where I stood, who, clothed alike
In unspotted snow-white dresses,
With a courteous air received me,
And too humbly did me reverence.
One, who seemed to be among them
The superior, said: "Remember
That in God you place your faith,
And that you be not dejected
In your battle with the demons;
For if moved by what they threaten,
Or may promise, you turn back,
You will have to dwell forever
In the lowest depths of hell
Amid torments most excessive."
Angels were these men for me,
And so greatly was I strengthened
By their counsel and advice
That revived I once more felt me.
On a sudden then the whole
Hall unto mine eyes presented
Nothing but infernal visions,
Fallen angels, the first rebels,
And in forms so horrible,
So disgusting, that resemblance

It would be in vain to look for;
 And one said to me: "Demented,
 Reckless fool, who here hast wished
 Prematurely to present thee
 To thy destined punishment,
 And the pains that thou deservest;
 If thy sins are so immense,
 That thyself must needs condemn them,
 Since thou in the eye of God
 Never can have hope of mercy,
 Why hast thou come here thyself
 To endure them? Back to earth, then,
 Go, Oh! go, and end thy life;
 And as thou hast lived, so perish.
 Then again thou'lt come to see us;
 For hath hell prepared already
 That dread seat in which thou must
 Sit forever and forever."—

I did answer not a word;
 And then giving me some heavy
 Blows, my hands and feet they bound,
 Tying them with thongs together,
 And then caught and wounded me
 With sharp hooks of burning metal,
 Dragging me through all the cloisters,
 Where they lit a fire and left me
 Headlong plunged amid the flames.
 I but cried, "O Jesus! help me."
 At the words the demons fled,
 And the fire went out and ended.
 Then they brought me to a plain,
 Where the blackened earth presented
 Fruits of thistles and of thorns,
 'Stead of pink and rose sweet scented.
 Here a biting wind passed by,
 Which with subtle sharpness entered
 Even my bones, whose faintest breath
 Like the keenest sword-edge cleft me.
 Here in the profoundest depths
 Sadly, mournfully lamented

Myriad souls, their parents cursing
From whose loins they had descended.
Such despairing shrieks and cries,
Such blaspheming screams were blended,
Such atrocious oaths and curses
So repeated and incessant,
That the very demons shuddered.
I passed on, and in a meadow
Found me next, whose plants and grasses
Were all flames, which waved and bent them,
As when in the burning August
Wave the gold ears all together.
So immense it was, the sight
Never could make out where ended
This red field, and in it lay
An uncountable assemblage
All recumbent in the fire;
Through their bodies and their members
Burning spikes and nails were driven;
These with feet and hands extended
Were held nailed upon the ground,
Vipers of red fire the entrails
Gnawed of some; while others lying,
With their teeth in maniac frenzy
Bit the earth; and some there were
Piecemeal who themselves dismembered,
And who seemed to die, but only
To revive and die forever.
There the ministers of death
Flung me from them bound and helpless,
But at the sweet name of Jesus
All their fury fled and left me.
I passed on, and found me where
Some were cured, by a strange method,
Of their cruel wounds and torments;
Lead and burning pitch were melted,
And being poured upon their sores
Made a cautery most dreadful.
Then I saw a certain building,
Out of which bright rays extended

From the windows and the doors,
 As when conflagration settles
 On a house, the flame bursts forth
 Where an opening is presented.
 "This," they told me, "is the villa
 Of delights, the bath of pleasures,
 The abode of the luxurious,
 Where are punished all those women
 Who were in the other life,
 From frivolity excessive,
 Too much given to scented waters,
 Unguents, rouges, baths and perfumes."
 I went in, and there beheld,
 In a tank of cold snow melted,
 Many lovely women bathing,
 With an upturned look of terror;
 Underneath the water they
 Were the prey of snakes and serpents,
 For the fishes and the sirens
 Of this sea they represented;
 In the clear transparent crystal
 Stiff and frozen were their members,
 Icy hard their hair was lifted,
 Chattering struck their teeth together.
 Passing out, the demons brought me
 To a mountain so tremendous
 In its height, that as it rose
 Through the sky its peak dissevered,
 If it did not tear and rend
 The vast azure veil celestial;
 In the middle of this peak
 A volcano stood, which, belching
 Flames, appeared as if to spit them
 In the very face of heaven.
 From this burning cone, this crater,
 Fire at intervals ascended
 In which issued many souls,
 Who again its womb reëntered,
 Oft repeating and renewing
 This ascending and descending.

At this time a scorching wind
Caught me when I least expected,
Blowing me from where I stood,
So that instantly it set me
In the depths of that abyss.
I, too, was shot up: a second
Wind-gust came, that with it brought
Myriad legions, who impelled me
Rudely to another part,
Where it seemed I saw assembled
All the other souls I had seen,
But who here were all collected;
And though this was the abode
Where the pains were most excessive,
I remarked that all therein
Faces bore of glad expression,
Countenances calm and sweet,
No impatience in their gestures
Or their words; but with their eyes
Fixed on heaven, as if thus set there
To ask mercy, ever weeping
Tears of tenderness and penance.
That it was the Purgatory
I at once by this detected,
Where the happy souls are purged from
Their more venial offenses.
I was not subdued even here,
Though the demons stormed and threatened
Me the more: I rather felt
By the sight renewed and strengthened.
Then they, seeing that they could not
Shake my constancy, presented
To my eyes their greatest torments,
That which is in an especial
Sense called hell; and so they brought me
To a river, all the herbage
Of whose banks was flowers of fire,
And whose stream was sulphur melted;
The dread monsters of its tide
Were the hydras and the serpents;

It was very wide, and o'er it
 Was a narrow bridge suspended,
 Which but seemed a line, no more,
 And so delicate and slender
 That in my opinion no one
 Without breaking it could ever
 Pass across. "Look here," they said,
 "By this narrow way 'tis destined
 Thou must cross; see thou the means.
 And for thy o'erwhelming terror
 See how these have fared who tried
 Before thee." And then directly
 I saw those who tried to pass
 Fall into the stream, where serpents
 Tore them in a thousand pieces
 With their claws and teeth's sharp edges.
 I invoked the name of God,
 And could dare with it to venture
 To the other side to pass,
 Without yielding to the terror
 Of the winds and of the waves,
 Though they fearfully beset me.
 Yes I passed, and in a wood,
 So delightful and so fertile,
 Found me, that in it I could,
 After what had passed, refresh me.
 On my way as I advanced,
 Cedars, palms, their boughs extended,
 Trees of paradise, indeed,
 As I may with strictness term them;
 All the ground being covered over
 With the rose and pink together
 Formed a carpet, in whose hues
 White and green and red were blended.
 There the amorous song-birds sang
 Tenderly their sweet distresses,
 Keeping, with the thousand fountains
 Of the streams, due time and measure.
 Then upon my vision broke
 A great city, proud and splendid,

Which had even the sun itself
For its towers' and turrets' endings;
All the gates were of pure gold,
Into which had been inserted
Exquisitely, diamonds, rubies,
Topaz, chrysolite and emerald.
Ere I reached the gates they opened,
And the saints in long procession
Solemnly advanced to meet me,
Men and women, youths and elders,
Boys and girls and children came,
All so joyful and contented.
Then the seraphim and angels,
In a thousand choirs advancing,
To their golden instruments
Sang the symphonies of heaven;
After them at last approached
The most glorious and resplendent
Patrick, the great patriarch,
Who his gratulations telling
That I had fulfilled my word
Ere I died, as he expected,
He embraced me; all displaying
Joy and gladness in my welfare.
Thus encouraged he dismissed me,
Telling me no mortal ever,
While in life, that glorious city
Of the saints could hope to enter;
That once more unto the world
I should go, my days to end there.
Finally my way retracing,
I came back, quite unmolested
By the dark infernal spirits,
And at last the gate of entrance
Having reached, you all came forward
To receive me and attend me.
And since I from so much danger
Have escaped, Oh! deign to let me,
Pious father, here remain
Till my life is happily ended.

VII.

Closing Period of the Spanish Drama.

In the seventeenth century the Spaniards were regarded as the dictators of the drama, and from them men of the highest genius in other lands were not ashamed to borrow. Nowhere else could be found, in such abundance, new plays teeming with romantic incidents, intrigues, disguises and interesting personages, all mingled with scenes from active life and presented with the beauty of language and brilliancy of description characteristic of the great Castilian masters. If Spanish subjects were adapted to the tastes of the French or Italians, and even rendered conformable to rules which the Spaniards themselves despised, this was rather in deference to the authority of the ancients than to please the people, who, indeed, would accept almost anything that came from the Castile of olden days. But this condition of affairs has long since been reversed; for after the days of Calderon no new element was introduced into the drama to give new life to its exhausted vitality, and from this period it fell into a moribund condition. In France and Italy the drama of Spain is almost unknown, in England it is ignored, and

if in Germany it retained a more permanent foothold, it never became completely naturalized.

Decline of the Drama.

The Spaniards have only themselves to accuse for so rapid a decline and so entire an oblivion. Instead of perfecting what they had begun, and advancing in the career of glory on which they had entered, they have only copied themselves and each other, retracing a thousand times their own footsteps, without adding anything to their art, and without introducing into it any variety. They had witnessed two men of genius, who composed their pieces in a few days, or rather a few hours. They thought themselves obliged to imitate this rapidity, and hence they abstained from all care and correction, not less scrupulously than a dramatic author in France would have insisted on them. They considered it essential to their fame to compose their plays without study, if, indeed, we may speak of fame when they aspired to nothing further than the transitory applause of an idle populace and the pleasure of novelty, to which a pecuniary profit was attached, while the greater number did not even attempt to attract to their pieces the attention of their well-informed contemporaries or the judgment of posterity, by committing them to the press.

In the *Commedia dell' Arte* of the Italians we have those extemporaneous masqued pieces, with given characters, oft-repeated jests and incidents which we have met with twenty times before, but adapted, well or ill, to a new production. The works of the Spanish school

which was contemporary with Calderon, and which succeeded him, may with propriety be compared to these fugitive pieces. The extemporaneous part was produced with a little more care, since, instead of catching the moment of inspiration on the stage, the author sought it by some hours of labor in his closet. They were composed in verse, but in the running and easy form of the *Redondilhas*, which naturally flowed from the pen. In other respects the writer did not give himself more trouble to observe probability, historical facts or national manners than an author of the Italian harlequin plays, nor did he attempt, in any greater degree, novelty in the characters, the incidents or the jests, or pay any greater respect to morality. He produced his comedies as articles of trade; he found it more easy and more lucrative to write a second than to correct the first, and it was through this negligence and precipitation that, under the reign of Philip IV, the stage was deluged with an unheard-of number of dramas.

Collections of Plays.

The titles, the authors and the history of this innumerable multitude of plays have escaped not only the foreigner, who can bestow merely a glance on the literature of other nations, but even those Spanish writers who have exerted themselves most to preserve every production which could contribute to the fame of their country. Each troupe of comedians had its own repository, or collection, and endeavored to retain the sole proprietorship; while the booksellers, from time to time,

printed on speculation pieces which were obtained from the manager oftener than from the author. In this manner were formed those collections of *Comedias varias* which we find in libraries, and which were almost always printed without correction, criticism or judgment. The works of individuals were rarely collected or published, and chance more than the taste of the public has saved a few from the mass which has perished. Thus the opinions of critics on the personal merits of each author become necessarily vague and uncertain. We should have more reason to regret this confusion if the character of the poets were to be found in their writings, if it were possible to assign to each his rank and to distinguish his style or principles; but the resemblance is so great that we could readily believe all these plays to have been written by the same hand, and if any one of them has an advantage over the others, it seems more attributable to the happy choice of the subject, or to some historical trait, romance or intrigue which the author has had the good fortune to select, than to the talent with which they are treated.

Among the various collections of Spanish plays, some of the best are anonymous, especially those published as the works of a poet of the court; *de un Ingenio de esta Corte*. It is known that Philip IV wrote several pieces for the stage under this name, and we may readily imagine that those which were supposed to come from his pen would be more eagerly sought after than others. It is not impossible for a very good king to write very bad plays; and Philip IV, who was anything rather than a good king, or a distinguished man, had

still less chance of succeeding as a poet. It is, nevertheless, curious to observe a monarch's view of private life, and what notion a person entertains of society, who is, by his rank, elevated above all participation in it. Other plays, also, which, though not the work of the king, were written by some of his courtiers, his officers of state, or his friends, might, on that account, attract our notice; but nothing can be more vague than the title of these pieces; for an unknown individual may arrogate to himself at will a rank which we have no means of ascertaining; and the Spaniards often extend the name of the Court to everything within the sphere of the capital. Be this, however, as it may, it is among these productions of a Court poet that we find some of the most attractive of Spanish comedies.

The Devil Turned Preacher.

Such, for instance, is *The Devil Turned Preacher*, the work of a devout servant of St. Francis and a Capuchin monk. He supposes that the devil Luzbel has succeeded, by his intrigues, in exciting in Lucca an extreme animosity against the Capuchins; everyone refuses them alms; they are ready to perish with hunger, and are reduced to the last extremity; and the first magistrate in the city at length orders them to leave it. But at the moment that Luzbel is congratulating himself on his victory, the infant Jesus descends to earth with St. Michael. To punish the devil for his misdeeds, he compels him to clothe himself in the habit of St. Francis and then to preach in Lucca in order to counter-

act the mischief he had done; to ask alms, and to revive the charitable disposition of the inhabitants, and not to quit the city or the habit of the order until he had built in Lucca another convent for the followers of St. Francis, larger and more richly endowed than the former. The conceit is sufficiently whimsical, and none the less so that we find the subject treated with the most sincere devotion and the most implicit belief in the miracles of the Franciscans. The solicitude of the devil, who endeavors to terminate, as soon as possible, so disagreeable a business; the zeal with which he preaches; the hidden expressions by which he disguises his mission and wishes to pass off his chagrin as a religious mortification; the prodigious success which attends his exertions in opposition to his own interests; the only enjoyment which is left him in his trouble—to torment the slothful monk who accompanies him in asking alms, and to cheat him in his gormandizing—all this is represented with a gayety and life which render this piece very amusing in the perusal, and which caused it to be received with transport by the audience when it was given on the stage at Madrid in the form of a regular play. It was not one of the least pleasures of the spectators to laugh so long at the expense of the devil, as we are taught to believe that the laugh is usually on his side.

Agustin Moreto.

Among the rivals of Calderon, one of the most celebrated and most deserving of notice was Agustin Moreto, who enjoyed, like him, the favor of Philip IV;

was, like him, a zealot as well as a comic poet; and, toward the end of his life, a priest, though when he entered into the ecclesiastical state he abandoned the theatre. He possessed more vivacity than Calderon, and his plots give rise to more amusing scenes. He attempted, too, a more precise delineation of character, and endeavored to bestow on his comedies, as the fruits of accurate observation, an interest which is seldom found in the Spanish drama. Several of his works were introduced on the French stage at the time when the authors of that country borrowed so much from Spain. That which was best known to the French people, in consequence of being for a long time acted on Shrove Tuesday, is the *Don Japhet of Armenia*, of Scarron, almost literally translated from *El Marques del Cigarral*; but the latter is not among the best efforts of Moreto. There are to be found, for instance, characters much more happily drawn, with much more interest in the plot, more invention and a more lively dialogue in his comedy entitled *It Cannot Be*; where a woman of talent and spirit, who is beloved by a man of jealous disposition, proposes to herself, before marrying him, to convince him that it is impossible to guard a woman effectually, and that the only safe mode is to trust to her own honor. The lesson is severe, for she assists the sister of her lover in an intrigue, although he kept her shut up, and watched her with extreme distrust. She contrives to arrange interviews with a young man; she aids the sister in escaping from her brother's house, and in marrying without his consent; and when she has enjoyed the alarm into which he is thrown, and has

convinced him that, notwithstanding all his caution and all his threats, he has been grossly duped, she consents to give him her hand. The remainder of the plot is conducted with sufficient probability and much originality, giving rise to many entertaining scenes, of which Molière has availed himself in his *École des Maris*.

Zarate.

There is a play in much the same style by Don Fernando de Zarate, called *La Presumida y la Hermosa*, containing strong traits of character joined to a very entertaining plot. There were still to be found in Spain men of taste, who treated with ridicule the affected style introduced by Gongora. Zarate gives to Leonora, a female pedant, the most conceited language, which does not differ much from that of Gongora, and he contrives at the same time to show its absurdity, while his Gracioso exclaims against the outrage thus committed upon the Castilian tongue. The two sisters, Leonora and Violante, have in this piece nearly the same characters as Armande and Henriette in the *Femmes Savantes*; but the Spaniards did not attempt the nicer shades of character, and those which they drew had little influence on passing events. Leonora finds a lover, amiable, noble and rich, as also does her fair and engaging sister; her learning neither adds to nor diminishes the chances of her happiness, for a stratagem, conceived and executed by a knavish valet, decides the fate of all the characters, and the chief interest of the piece centres in the plot. Though the author has doubt-

less taken some hints from *Les Précieuses Ridicules* of Molière, the piece is largely original, especially as to plan, while the dialogue is fairly entertaining.

Francisco de Roxas.

A comic author who enjoyed the highest reputation in the middle of the seventeenth century was Francisco de Roxas, knight of the order of St. James, a great number of whose pieces we find in an ancient collection of Spanish comedies, and from whom the French stage has borrowed several dramas, including the *Venceslas* of Rotrou and *Don Bertran de Cigarral* of Corneille. The latter is translated from the one entitled *The Plot is Laid Among Fools*, which passes for the best that Roxas has written. In another, called *The Patroness of Madrid, Our Lady of Atocha*, written in antiquated language, apparently to give it more respectability, are united all the extravagances and all the moral absurdities that we have seen exhibited in the religious pieces of Calderon.

Juan de Hoz.

The critics of Germany and Spain have selected *The Punishment of Avarice*, by Juan de Hoz, as one of the best in his class of plays. This piece, though highly humorous, is an instance of that radical defect of the Spanish drama, which, by the intricacy of the plot, entirely destroys the effect of character. Juan de Hoz has painted the character of the miser Marcos in strong colors; but the stratagem by which Donna Isidora con-

trives to marry him so far distracts the attention that the avarice of the principal personage is no longer the striking feature of the piece. There is, moreover, a want of propriety in giving to a comedy a title which announces a moral aim when it concludes with the triumph of vice, and is marked by a shameful dereliction of all probity, even in those characters which are represented as respectable.

Canizarez.

One of the latest of the dramatic writers of Spain in the seventeenth century was Joseph Canizarez, who flourished in the reign of Charles II, leaving behind him a number of plays in almost every class. Some of these are historical, as *Picarillo en España*, founded on the adventures of a Frederic de Braquemont, a son of him who, with John de Bethencourt, discovered and conquered the Canaries; but the historic plays of Canizarez are less romantic than those entirely of his own invention. To conclude our review of this era, neither the comedies of Canizarez, which are the most modern, nor those of Guillen de Castro and Juan Ruys de Alarcon, which are the most ancient, nor those of Alvaro Cubillo, of Aragon, of Francisco de Leyra, of Augustino de Zalazar y Torres, of Christoval de Monroy y Silva, Juan de Matos Fragoso and Hieronymo Cancer, possess a character sufficiently marked to enable us to discover in them the manner and style of the author. Their works, like their names, are confounded with others, and after having described a dramatic

epoch, whose richness at first view astonished us, we quit it with a feeling of monotony and fatigue.

Poetry Under the Philips.

The poetry of Spain continued to flourish during the reigns of the three Philips, in spite of the national decline. The calamities which befell the monarchy, the double yoke of political and religious tyranny, the continued defeats, the revolt of conquered countries, the destruction of the armies, the ruin of provinces and the stagnation of commerce could not wholly suppress the efforts of poetic genius. The Castilians, under Charles V, were intoxicated by the false glory of their monarch and by the high station which they had newly acquired in Europe. A noble pride and consciousness of their power urged them on to new enterprises; they thirsted after distinction and renown, and they rushed forward with increasing ardor in the career which was still open to them. The number of candidates did not diminish, and as the different avenues which led to fame, the service of their country, the cultivation of liberal knowledge and every branch of literature connected with philosophy were closed against them, as all civil employ was become the timid instrument of tyranny, and as the army was humiliated by continued defeats, poetry alone remained to those who were ambitious to excel. The number of poets went on increasing in proportion as the number of men of merit in every other class diminished. But with the reign of Philip IV the spirit which had till then animated the Castilians ceased. For

some time before, poetry had partaken of the general decline, although the ardor of its votaries had not diminished, and affectation, and bombast, and all the faults of Gongora had corrupted its style. At length the impulse subsided; the vanity of the conceit which attached itself to an affected and overloaded style was perceived; and there was no one to point the way to improvement. Spanish writers abandoned themselves to apathy and ease; they bowed the neck to the yoke; they attempted to forget the public calamities, to restrain their sentiments, to confine their tastes to physical enjoyments, to luxury, sloth and effeminacy. The nation slumbered, and literature almost ceased to exist.

Philip V did not influence the literature of Spain by any particular attachment to that of France. Of slender talents, and possessed of little taste or information, his grave, sombre and silent character was rather Castilian than French. He founded the academy of History, which led the learned to useful researches into Spanish antiquities, and the academy of Language, which distinguished itself by the compilation of its excellent dictionary. In other respects he left his subjects to their national bias in the cultivation of letters. Meanwhile, the splendor of the reign of Louis XIV, which had dazzled all Europe, and which had imposed on other nations and on foreign literature the laws of French taste, had, in its turn, astonished the Spaniards. A party was formed among the men of letters and the fashionable world, by which the regular and classical compositions of the French were decidedly preferred to the richness and brilliancy of Spanish imagination.

On the other hand, the public attached itself with obstinacy to a style of poetry which seemed to be allied to the national glory, and the conflict between these two parties was more particularly felt on the stage. Men of letters regarded Lopé de Vega and Calderon with a mixture of pity and contempt, while the people, on the other hand, would not allow, in the theatrical performances, any imitation or translation from the French, and granted their applause only to the compositions of their ancient poets. The stage, therefore, remained, during the eighteenth century, on the same footing as in the time of Calderon, except that few new pieces appeared but such as were of a religious tendency, as in these, it was imagined, faith might supply the want of talent.

Libres of the Saints.

In the early part of the eighteenth century were published or represented dramatic lives of the saints, which in general ought to have been objects of ridicule and scandal, and which, nevertheless, had obtained not only the permission, but the approbation and applause of the Inquisition. Such, among others, are two plays by Don Bernard Joseph de Reynoso y Quinones, the one entitled *The Sun of Faith at Marseilles*, and the *Conversion of France by Saint Mary Magdalen*, and the other, *The Sun of the Magdalen Shining Brighter in its Setting*. The former was represented nineteen times successively after Christmas of 1730; the latter was received with no less enthusiasm in the following year. The Magdalen, Martha and Lazarus arrive at Marseilles

in a vessel which is shipwrecked by a tempest, and appear walking tranquilly on the raging sea. The Magdalen, called on to combat with the priest of Apollo, is at one time seen by him and by all the people in the heavens, surrounded by the angels, and at another time on the same ground as himself. She overthrows, at a word, his temple, and finally commands the broken columns and fallen capitals to return of themselves to their places. The grossest pleasantries of the buffoons who accompany her, the most eccentric burlesques of manners and history are mingled with the prayers and mysteries of religion. There are also two comedies, more extravagant, if possible, by Manuel Francisco de Armesto, secretary of the Inquisition. Their subject is the life of the sister Mary of Jesus de Agreda, whom he designates as the greatest historian of sacred history. Of the many qualities with which Calderon clothed his eccentric compositions, extravagance was the only one that remained to the modern authors.

But while the taste of the people was so eager for this kind of spectacle, and while it was encouraged by the clergy and supported by the Inquisition, the court, enlightened by criticism and by a better taste, was desirous of rescuing Spain from the scandalous reproach which these so-called pious representations excited among strangers. Charles III prohibited, in 1765, the further performance of religious plays and *Autos sacramentales*, and the house of Bourbon had already deprived the people of another recreation not less dear to them, the *Autos-da-fé*. The last of these human sacrifices was celebrated in 1680, in conformity to the wishes

of Charles II and as a festival at the same time religious and national, which would draw down on him the favor of heaven. After the extinction of the Spanish branch of the house of Austria the Inquisition was no longer allowed to burn its victims in public, but it continued to exercise the most outrageous cruelties on them in its dungeons.

Luzan.

The school of literary critics which endeavored to reform the national taste and adapt it to the French model had at its head, at the middle of the eighteenth century, a man of great talents and extensive information, who exercised a considerable influence on the character and productions of his contemporaries. This was Ignazio de Luzan, a member of the academies of language, history and painting, a counsellor of state and minister of commerce. He was a lover of poetry, and himself composed verses with elegance. He found in his nation little in the way of criticism, except among the imitators of Gongora, who had reduced to rules all the bad taste of their school. It was for the avowed purpose of attacking them that he carefully studied the principles of Aristotle and those of the French authors; and as he was himself more remarkable for elegance and correctness of style than for strength of imagination, he sought less to unite the precision of the French to the eminent qualities of his countrymen than to introduce a foreign literature in the place of that which they possessed. In conformity with these principles, and in order to reform the national taste, he composed his celebrated *Treatise on Poetry*,

printed at Saragossa in 1737. This work, written with great judgment and a display of vast erudition, clear without languor, elegant and unaffected, was received by men of letters as a masterpiece, and has ever since been cited by the classical party in Spain as containing the basis and rules of correct taste.

Imitations of the French.

About the middle of the eighteenth century a few Spanish authors commenced writing for the theatre on the principles of Luzan and in the French style. Luzan himself translated a piece of *La Chaussée*, and many other dramatic translations were represented about the same time on the stage of Madrid. Augustin de Montiano y Luzando, counsellor of state and member of the two academies, composed two tragedies, *Virginia* and *Ataulpho*, which are, says Boutterwek, drawn with such exact conformity to the French model that we should take them rather for translations than for original compositions. They are both, he adds, frigid and tame, but the purity and correctness of the language, the care which the author has taken to avoid all false metaphors, and the natural style of the dialogue render the perusal of them highly agreeable. Like Italian tragedies, they are composed in blank iambics. Luis Joseph Velasquez, the historian of Spanish poetry, attached himself to the same party. His work, entitled *Origenes de la Poesia Española*, printed in 1754, shows how much the ancient national poetry was then forgotten, since we find a man of his genius and learning often involving its history in

fresh confusion, instead of throwing new light upon it. His work has been translated into the German tongue and enriched with extensive observations by Dieze. These critics were not deficient in talent and taste, although they were incapable of fully appreciating the imagination of their ancestors; but Spain, from the death of Philip IV to the middle of the eighteenth century, did not produce a single poet who could merit the attention of posterity.

In the latter part of the eighteenth century a love of national literature seemed to revive in the narrow circle of Spanish authors. The correctness of the French style did not wholly satisfy them; they felt an attachment to the poets of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and writers of real merit attempted to unite Spanish genius with classical elegance.

Huerta.

The first who ventured to attack the French style was Vincent Garcias de la Huerta, a member of the Spanish academy and librarian to the king. Before applying himself to criticism, he had already won reputation as a poet and writer of romances in the ancient style; but it was with much misgiving that he took upon himself to imitate the old masters of the Spanish stage, who for the last hundred years had been considered as barbarous. He composed the tragedy of *Rachel*, in which he proposed to unite the brilliant imagination of Spanish poetry with the dignity of the French, avoiding the conventional forms of the French drama without sac-

rificing its better qualities. It was performed in all the theatres of Spain, and everywhere received with enthusiasm, two thousand copies being forwarded in manuscript, before it was printed, to various parts of the Spanish dominions, including America. Yet it is by no means a masterpiece, and can only be regarded as a proof of the poetical and national sentiment of a man who was desirous of contributing to the reëstablishment of dramatic art in his native country.

Rachel.

The subject is taken from the ancient history of Castile. Alfonso IX, who was defeated by the Moors in the battle of Alarcos, in 1195, was attached to a beautiful Jewess, called Rachel, whom the nobles and people accused as the cause of the calamities which had befallen the monarchy. He is entreated to terminate a passion which all his court regarded as dishonorable. For a long time he remains undecided between duty and love, when a rebellion, which he had with difficulty suppressed, breaks out afresh. Rachel, while the king is on a hunting excursion, is surprised in the palace by the rebels; her counsellor, Reuben, is compelled to kill her in order to save his own life, and he is himself slain by the king on his return. The dialogue is wholly in unrhymed iambics, without any intermixture of sonnets or lyric verses, and there is no very striking scene, although the deaths at the conclusion are represented on the stage. The language is dignified throughout, and many scenes are highly pathetic; but the characters are

badly managed. The beautiful Rachel does not appear sufficiently often; her counsellor, Reuben, is a repulsive character, and Alfonso is one of the feeblest of monarchs. It seems that Huerta wished to flatter not only the love of the Spaniards for their ancient drama, but also their hatred of the Jews. In another piece, called *Agamemnon Vengado*, he attempts to apply the romantic style to a classical subject; he mingles iambs with octaves and lyric verses, and thus advances a step farther toward the drama of Calderon. In order to re-establish the reputation of the ancient dramatists, Huerta published, in 1785, his *Teatro Español*, in sixteen volumes, in which he inserted many criticisms and invectives against the French stage. His collection consists almost entirely of comedies of the cloak and the sword, and he has not admitted a single play of Lopé de Vega, the historical plays of Calderon, or any of his *Autos Sacramentales*, fearing probably the hostility to which such compositions would have exposed him.

Eighteenth Century Dramatists.

While Huerta won fame by restoring the ancient school, others were successful in introducing the French style on the Spanish stage. In some instances, in imitation of Marivaux, they have painted elegant manners, fashionable sensibility and the slighter interests of the heart; in others they have attempted the higher drama, and sometimes they have risen to comedies of character. Nicolas Gernandez de Moratin is known as an author of regular tragedy, Leandro Fernandez de Moratin as a

comic author, and Don Luciano Francisco Comella as approaching nearer than either to the old national style. Another is Ramon de la Cruzycano, who published a great number of comedies, dramas, interludes and saynetes, the last seeming to have retained all the gayety of olden times. The author has taken pleasure in describing in these little pieces the manners of the people, and introduces market-women, sellers of chestnuts, carpenters and artisans of every kind. The vivacity of the inhabitants of the South, their passionate sentiments, their vivid imagination and their picturesque language preserve, even among the lower classes, something poetical, and ennoble the characters drawn from this sphere of society. Cruzycano has written, under the name of Loa, prologues for the comedies represented before the court, and we there find allegorical beings conversing with men agreeably to the ancient taste. Thus, in the *Vaqueros de Aranjuez*, which served as a prologue to a translation of *The Barber of Seville*, the Tagus, the Escorial, Madrid and Loyalty appeared at the same time with shepherds and shepherdesses. It is true, indeed, that the allegory is not throughout treated with the old-time gravity, and that the shepherds occasionally indulge in jests on these eccentric interlocutors assuming the human form. The works of Cruzycano are composed in redondilhas, and lyric verses are occasionally mingled with them to express passion or sensibility; but this similarity of exterior form only renders the contrast of manners more striking; we think ourselves transported into another world, and we cannot conceive how Spanish words can express sentiments so opposite

to those of the ancient Spaniards. But Cruzycano was writing for the court.

There is no longer any trace in the higher ranks of the courteous gallantry of the cavalier, of the mixed reserve and passion of the women, of suspicious jealousy in the husband, of the cruel severity often shown by fathers and brothers, or of the point of honor so destructive to the happiness of lovers. A cavalier of the Italian type, under the name of Cortejo, is admitted to an intimacy with a young wife; his rights are acknowledged; to him solely belong the private conversation, the first place by her side, the honor of dancing with her, and all the tender sentiments and endearments of marriage; while the husband, exposed to caprice and ill-humor, neglected or overlooked by all the guests in the house, must content himself with merely paying the expenses. The two little pieces of *The Ball* and *The Ball Seen from Behind* show that Spain has adopted the manners of Italy, and another, taken from fashionable life, entitled *The Happy Divorce*, indicates that the Spaniards were well acquainted with the character of a man of successful gallantry, the frivolous pride of these conquests assuming the place of the ancient distinctions of honor.

Yriarte.

The closing decades of the eighteenth century also gave birth to lyrical poets, and to a few works of originality. Thomas de Yriarte, principal keeper of the records of the Supreme Council, in his *Fabulas Litterarias*, published in 1782, attained in some degree to the grace

and simplicity of La Fontaine; and their merit was the more felt, as at that period no good fabulist had appeared in Spain. He never displayed more grace than when he borrowed the redondilhas of the ancient Castilian romances. The following, named *The Bear and the Monkey*, is written and rhymed in this fashion:

THE BEAR AND THE MONKEY.

A bear with whom a Piedmontese
Join'd company to earn their bread,
Essay'd on half his legs to please
The public, where his master led.

With looks that boldly claimed applause,
He asked the ape, "Sir, what think you?"
The ape was skilled in dancing-laws,
And answered, "It will never do."

"You judge the matter wrong, my friend,"
Bruin rejoind'd; "you are not civil!"
Were these legs given for you to mend
The ease and grace with which they swivel?"

It chanced a pig was standing by:
"Bravo! astonishing! encore!"
Exclaimed the critic of the sty,
"Such dancing we shall see no more!"

Poor Bruin, when he heard the sentence,
Began an inward calculation;
Then, with a face that spoke repentance,
Express'd aloud his meditation.

"When the sly monkey called me dunce,
I entertained some slight misgiving;
But, pig! thy praise has proved at once
That dancing will not earn my living."

Let every candidate for fame
Rely upon this wholesome rule;—
“Your work is bad, if wise men blame,
But worse, if lauded by a fool!”

Yriarte also wrote a didactic poem on music, which obtained a considerable reputation, but which, notwithstanding the poetical ornaments with which the author has occasionally interspersed it, is, in the scientific portion of it, little more than rhymed prose.

Boutterwek mentions, as a favorite of the Graces, and as a poet worthy of the best times of Spanish literature, Juan Melendez Valdes, whose poems were printed at Madrid in 1785. From his youth he was a follower of Horace, Tibullus, Anacreon and Villegas; and, if he has not attained the voluptuous grace of the last, he has still adorned his poetry with a moral delicacy to which Villegas had little pretension. The pleasures, the pains and the joys of love, the festivals, the leisure and the tranquil hours of a country life are the subjects which Melendez delighted to celebrate. His lively and romantic genius would characterize him as a Spaniard, but the turn of his thoughts is more allied to England and Germany. Some of his idyls have all the grace of Gessner, joined to the harmonious language of the South.

Decadence.

In the closing period of the literature of Spain, it is with regret that we perceive the brilliant illusions which illustrious names and chivalric manners at first excited, successively vanishing from us. The poem of *The Cid*

first presented itself to us among Spanish works, as the Cid himself among the heroes of Castile, and after him we find nothing in any degree equaling either the noble simplicity or his real character or the charm of the brilliant fictions of which he is the subject. Little that has since appeared can justly demand our unqualified admiration. In the midst of the most brilliant efforts of Spanish genius our taste has been continually wounded by extravagance and affectation, or our reason has been offended by an eccentricity often bordering on folly. It is impossible to reconcile the alliance of such an imagination with so whimsical a taste, and such an elevation of soul with so great a perversion of truth. It may be observed that we have seen the Italians fall into the same error, but they retrieved their reputation, and the age which gave birth to Alfieri, Metastasio and Goldoni may, if it does not rival that of Ariosto and Tasso, at least bear a comparison with it. But the feeble efforts of Luzan, of Huerta, of Yriarte and Melendez, the only boast of their nation for more than a century, serve only to convince us how low their country had fallen. The inspiration of the earlier ages is extinct, and modern culture has been too imperfect and too restricted to supply the place of the riches no longer accorded by genius. The Italians had three periods of letters, divided by two long intervals of rest; that of original vigor, when Dante seemed to draw his inspiration from the force and plenitude of his own sentiments; that of classical taste, when the study of the ancients presented new treasures to Ariosto and to Tasso; and, lastly, that of reason and mind devoted

to the arts, when the elevation of thought and manly eloquence of Alfieri, and the exquisite observation of Goldoni, atone for the want of that fervent imagination which began to be exhausted.

But the literature of Spain has, strictly speaking, only one period—that of chivalry—and its sole riches consist in its ancient honor and frankness of character. It shines forth in all its splendor in the ancient Castilian romances; all the fund of sentiments, ideas, images and adventures of which she afterward availed herself is to be found in this original treasure. Boscan and Garcilaso, indeed, gave it a new form, but not a new substance and a new life. The same thoughts, the same romantic sentiments are found in these two poets and their school, with the addition only of a new dress and a form almost Italian. The Spanish drama awoke, and, for the third time, this primitive source of adventures, images and sentiments was brought into action in a new shape. Lopé de Vega and Calderon introduced on the stage the subjects of the early romances and transferred to dramatic dialogue the language of the national songs. Thus, under an apparent variety, the Spaniards have been wearied with monotony. The prodigality of their images and the brilliancy of their poetry discover only an actual poverty. If their minds had been properly disciplined, and if they had enjoyed freedom of thought, the Spanish writers would ultimately have extricated themselves from this dull routine, and would have entered on the same career as those of other nations.

The fund of images and adventures of which the

Spaniards have so frequently availed themselves is that to which, in our days, the name of romance has been particularly applied. We find here the sentiments, the opinions, the virtues and the prejudices of the middle ages; and since chivalric antiquity has been placed in opposition to heroic antiquity, it is interesting, even in a literary point of view, to observe the manner in which it has been treated by a lively and sensitive people, who rejected all new ideas, all foreign assistance, and the results of experience derived from other principles. The manners and prejudices of olden times present an abundance of riches to the poet, but it is necessary to be elevated above them to employ them with advantage. *Æschylus* and *Sophocles*, when they represent to us, with so much sublimity, the heroic age, are themselves raised above it, and employ the philosophy of the days of *Socrates* to give a just idea of the ages of *Œdipus* and *Agamemnon*. It is only by an accurate knowledge of the times that we can expect to give a new interest to the era of chivalry. But the Spaniards of modern days were in no wise superior to the personages who were the subject of their poetry. They were, on the contrary, far inferior to them; and they found themselves unqualified to render justice to a theme of which they were not masters.

In another point of view, also, the literature of Spain presents to us a singular phenomenon. While its character is essentially chivalric, we find its ornaments and its language borrowed from the Asiatics; we find Spain, the most western country of Europe, presenting us with the flowery diction and vivid imagination of the East.

It is not here intended to extol the oriental style in preference to the classical, nor to justify those gigantic hyperboles which so often offend our taste, and that profusion of images by which the poet seems desirous to inebriate our senses, investing all his ideas with the charm of sweetest odors, of beautiful colors and of harmonious language. It may be remarked, however, that the qualities which continually surprise us in the literature of Spain are the genuine characteristics of the poetry of India, Persia, Arabia and the East, poetry to which the most ancient nations of the world, and those which have had the greatest influence on civilization, have concurred in yielding their admiration. The sacred writings, moreover, present to us, in every page, instances of the highly figurative language, which we there receive with veneration, but which is not allowed in the moderns. In these different systems of literature, so far from assigning to any one an exclusive preference over the rest, we should accustom ourselves to estimate them all with justice, and thus to enjoy their distinct and several beauties. If we regard the literature of Spain as revealing to us, in some degree, the literature of the East, and as familiarizing us with a genius and taste differing so widely from our own, it will possess in our eyes a new interest. We may thus inhale, in a language allied to our own, the incense of Arabia and the perfumes of the East. We may view, as in a faithful mirror, those palaces of Bagdad, and that luxury of the caliphs, which revived the lustre of departed ages; and we may appreciate, through the medium of a people of Europe, once the greatest of all European nations,

the brilliant Asiatic poetry, which was the parent of so many beautiful creations.

Recent Dramatists.

The general popularity of the drama made it the most productive of praise and profit of all forms of literary activity in Spain. The poet or novelist, though sure of a better public now than at any former period, is not nearly so well paid, either in money or reputation, as the successful playwright. Hence, to succeed as a writer for the stage has been and is the ambition of most Spanish men of letters. Some of the most successful plays of modern times were written by Martinez de la Rosa, statesman and novelist. What little literature of any value Spain produced in the eighteenth century was destined for the stage. The comedies of the younger Moratin, a writer who lived into the nineteenth, are still played occasionally, and one of his successors, Breton de los Herreros, is probably the best writer Spain has produced since the partial revival of her literature. Nor are plays written only in Castilian. The Catalan stage can show some dramatists who rival the great men of old—even that wonder of ready-writing, Lopé de Vega—at least in the quality of fecundity. The popular Barcelonese, Serafi Pitarra, was probably the most productive playwright in Europe. With the exception of Lopé, none of the writers just mentioned are associated in the minds of foreigners or, indeed, of Spaniards, with that Spanish drama which has taken its place among the great literatures of the world. Beginning with

Moratin, who was almost a copyist of Molière, they have been powerfully influenced by France, which has thus paid back the debt that it owed to the earlier Spanish dramatists. During the eighteenth century French influence was so strong that Lopé de Vega and Calderon were looked upon by many of their countrymen as little better than barbarians. They have had their revenge, however, and their works, or adaptations from them, are now as frequently played in Spain as are those of the great masters of French or English dramatic literature in their native countries. They are also widely read, and efforts are being made to bring back the stage to the peculiarly Spanish models which they created.

French Influences.

We are accustomed to hear the Spanish stage spoken of as a storehouse of plot, intrigue and incident. The reader of Molière is aware that many of the stock incidents and some of the characters of his comedies were taken from the Spaniards; that he even directly imitated them in a few of the least successful of his works, and that from him and before his time these intriguing plots found their way to the English stage. But this justice is rendered to the Spaniards by tradition, not because the foreign reader is directly acquainted with their works. In point of fact, Spanish comedy is now rarely seen except by the light thrown on it by that of France. Guillen de Castro is remembered because his *Mocedades del Cid* inspired the masterpiece of Corneille. Every reader of the *Médecin malgré lui* has heard of the

Acero de Madrid of Lopé de Vega, but how many have read it even in a translation? The French theatre even attacked and for a time overpowered the Spanish in its own land.

The French dynasty, which ascended the Spanish throne in the first years of the eighteenth century, brought with it French customs and literature. The old national stage had expired, as far as that was possible among a people essentially mimetic, during the evil times of Charles II, who figures among Spanish monarchs as "the bewitched." When a revival came in happier days it was under the influence of the classic school. The highest ambition of Moratin and his followers was to write with due regard to the unities and the customs of good society. To them the rules of the classic school were the holy of holies, their native dramatists of the seventeenth century barbarians, or at best beginners, to be patted on the back with condescension. Bohl von Faber, a disciple of the Schlegels, known as an editor of the Spanish ballads, had to fight Calderon's battles against the poet's countrymen. But delivery came from the country which imposed the yoke. Spain, following the lead of her neighbor in literature as in politics, returned to the study of her own theatre under the leadership of Victor Hugo, then fresh from his victory over the classic school. Her numerous playwrights now swore by Lopé de Vega, as they had lately done by Molière. Gorostiza, Breton de los Herreros, Martinez de las Rosa and many others have kept their countrymen supplied with plays which rival those of their great days in at least two particulars—their number and their

defiance of all rules. They are almost nervously eager to disclaim any imitation of the French, but we find some difficulty in accepting their presentations. The best proof they give of their nationality is an unconscious one. Their indifference to character and their love of incident and plot make them give a coloring of their own to the matter they take from France. They are undoubtedly clever playwrights, but it is not of them we think when we speak of the Spanish comedy.

Faulty Editing.

If the Spanish dramatists are more talked about than known, it is certainly not due to any neglect of Spanish literature. *Don Quixote* is probably more read in England than in his native country. The sins of native editors have, perhaps, something to do with it. The early editions were shockingly mangled by pirates, and very little has been done to remove the traces of their handiwork. Even where zealous efforts have been made to restore the purity of the text, plays have been left unnoted, though bristling with reference to bygone customs, persons and places, which require explanation to the Spaniards of to-day as much as to the foreigner. But bad printing and bad editing would not prevent the Spanish dramatists being popular. However badly Calderon was edited, he would be widely read if he possessed one-half the great qualities which A. W. Schlegel found in him. Nor is it necessary to be a Spanish scholar in order to gain at least an approximate idea of his genius. Many of his works have been translated, and part at least of

the *Magico Prodigioso* is to be found consummately rendered in all the more complete editions of Shelley.

Estimate of Calderon and Lope de Vega.

The fact would seem to be that injudicious friends have done the object of their praise their usual ill office. Schlegel persuaded a great many people that Calderon was another and, perhaps, greater Shakespeare. But a little acquaintance with writers for the Spanish stage will dispel any idea that they belong to the class "that sees quite through the deeds of men." Competent judges, who at first were persuaded into believing that they did, ended by deciding that they were only playwrights, and that Calderon in particular was a very overrated playwright. The habit of judging them by the standard of Shakespeare has lowered the Spaniards in the estimation of their most favorable critics. Ford, who knew his *Don Quixote* by heart, wrote in the most superficial manner possible about the stage, and his articles on the subject are full of misplaced pedantry and enthusiasm. Even Lord Holland, who had gone the length of reading more than fifty of Lopé's plays, and who wrote a work on him and on Guillen de Castro, introduces them to his reader almost as if he felt ashamed of them. He stops to tell us that we must not expect from Lopé "deep reflections on morals and government," or "a philosophical view of the nature of man and of the construction of society."

But Lopé never intended to be philosophical. As he tells us in so many words, he wrote his plays to please

the vulgar who paid, and he fully gained his object. His example was in the main followed by other dramatists, and the reader who is content to look only for amusement may open their works with full confidence that he will be amused. But he must be prepared to look for his satisfaction entirely to the plot and the variety of incidents. As a work of which the interest consists in development of character, *Don Quixote* stands alone in Spanish literature. In every other work the interest is centred in the plot. The characters are fixed by custom and serve all writers alike. The Spaniard of the middle ages and of the sixteenth century was essentially a man of action. War and pillage were his favorite means of gaining wealth. When the people wished for the type of a prosperous man they found him in the soldiery of Cortés and Pizarro. A grant of land in the New World, or a commandery of a military order was the aim of a gentleman's ambition, and his way of gaining it was to serve for it in Flanders. As for thought, meditation or the careful weighing of motives and characters, there was no room for them in his life. The Church defined for him with hard and fast rules what was right and what was wrong. It classified his sins and his virtues, assigning to each its exact equivalent reward or punishment. The Inquisition undertook to argue with all who demurred to the Church's teaching. At the play, therefore, or in his novel, the Spaniard wanted to see something in actual progress; he was indifferent as to the character of the actors. No books in the world present less variety of type than the *novelas picarescas*. From the *Lazarillo* down to the *Gran Ta-*

caño we find the same hero at work. Base-born, impudent, thievish and cowardly, but good-natured and sincerely Catholic, he goes through endless exciting and improbable adventures, to end his life reflecting on the vanities of the world in the galleys, or, perhaps, settling down with the proceeds of his rogueries as a church-going citizen. The Spaniard read these books with never-failing delight, as he had done the monotonous tales of chivalry, and asked for no greater variety than an occasional change of sex in the principal character. The fact that the female rogue had nothing distinctly feminine about her, but was only the male rogue in petticoats, troubled him little. The rogue himself is no doubt a type of a whole class, and is pictured with no small vigor, but that was by the man who wrote the first picaresque novel; his successors copied him exactly, and the type, having been once created, became as conventional as the figure of a saint.

Characteristics of the Recent Drama.

As with the novel, so it was with the stage. There must be an intricate plot and an abundance of incident; the dramatis personæ are merely quantities—forces like the figures on a chessboard, crossing one another and clashing in the endless complications of intrigue. Rest is given from this confusing movement by the tirades, hundreds of lines long, which some of the dramatists put into the mouths of their characters. These harangues are full of conceits and hyperbole. The sun, moon and other heavenly bodies, flowers, jewels, seas, sky and earth are laid under contribution for meta-

phors, to be poured out with the profusion of treasures in a beggar's dream. And the Spaniard seems to feel the same pleasure in seeing all this magnificence rolled out before him as the miser in Horace did to see his heaps of gold. At times these tragedies are not merely ornamental, but contain a rapid summary of the plot—an occasionally indispensable aid for the due understanding of the more intricate plays—and were printed separately, for the convenience of the public. As in the picturesque novels, again, the world of the plays is a half-fantastic one. The players are dressed like Spaniards; the scene is laid in Spanish streets and houses, but the adventures transacted there are the adventures of fairy-land. The player was not asked "to hold the mirror up to nature," or the playwright to be true to life. What the spectator expected from them was a representation of the ideal life of movement, love-making, fighting and money-getting which he would like to lead himself. Just as much probability must be given to the events of the play as will prevent too great a gulf between them and the dull world of reality. They must take place in the world the Spaniard saw before his eyes, and the actors are to be himself and his fellow-men, not represented with any precision of detail or fine shading of individual character, but by a certain number of well-defined types, which appear in the earliest dawn of Spanish dramatic literature and remain almost unmodified to the end. The comedy of cloak and sword continued to give to the last the adventures of the very set of characters which first appears in the *Celestina* of Rodrigo Cota and Fernando de Rojas.

The Spanish drama of to-day, though still under the influence of the French romantic school, is returning once more to the old national models. Meanwhile, the old and ever popular religious performances are not entirely extinct in Spain and may long continue to survive. Whatever may be the future history of one of the most remarkable of dramatic literatures, it may be confidently predicted that, so long as Spain is Spain, her theatre will never be permanently denationalized, and that the revolutions it may be destined to undergo are unlikely to extinguish, in whatever degree they may repress, its conservative elements.

VIII.

The Spanish Stage and Dramatis Personæ.

With the stage, as with other Spanish institutions, the greatest attention is given, not to that which is most worthy, but to that which pleases best. Thus, a bull-fight will attract an assemblage ten times as large as will the finest drama of Lopé de Vega or Calderon. The former may be a splendid spectacle, but it is by no means the most creditable to the country which affords it, and, from an historical point of view, hardly deserves its reputation. In its present form, this is not only one of the worst, but also one of the newest entertainments in the country, little more than a hundred years old. When a bull-fight is mentioned in an old comedy or tale, it is as a sport in which the gentlemen of the day and their servants took an active part. When Aarsens de Sommelsdyck saw it in 1655, it had become vulgarized, but the ring was still open to all comers provided with the necessary arms and courage. The sober Hollander even thought it a "pretty sport enough," though not one good to take part in. Twenty years later the countess d'Aulnoy could, without being ridiculous, select the ring as the scene of one of those

romantic love-stories which the reader of her book of travels is constantly surprised to find cropping up amid shrewd observations on the world of sober reality, and lively pictures of the discomforts of Spanish travel. It was not till comparatively modern times, after generations of national decay and ignorance, that the bull-ring passed entirely into the hands of professional fighters. The end of the eighteenth century, the lowest point of Spain's degradation, saw the complete organization of the bull-fight, and its final victory over the older and nobler amusement of the theatre, which it has degraded, though it could not destroy. The theatre is many centuries older, and is by far the best of the historical institutions established in Spain for the public welfare. It has naturally been modified in the course of time, and has been powerfully influenced by the French; but it still retains a marked character of its own. The dramatic is probably to-day, as it was in the time of Lope de Vega, the most vigorous branch of Spanish literature.

Playhouses were probably established earlier in Spain than in any other European country, and, in spite of the strenuous efforts of the Church to close them, have continued to be numerous and flourishing down to the present day. Every city has not a bull-ring, but every town of importance, and some of very little importance, has its theatre or theatres. The numerous provincial divisions of the country, which have been politically so fatal, have been, on the whole, favorable to the stage. The actors and playwrights of the capital have never dominated their provincial rivals in Spain as they have

in France and England. The continued existence of dialects independent of the Castilian renders it almost as impossible that a successful Catalan actor, for example, should seek his fortune in Madrid as that an American player should betake himself to Paris. Then the national capabilities of the people supply a vast number of actors who can always perform a part with spirit, if not with very good taste. Many performers of great local repute have a double profession, following a trade by day and treading the boards by night. Nor is the acting of plays confined by any means to the regular theatres. Societies of amateurs are to be found even among the work-people; and, though their attempts at acting tragedy or high comedy are often sufficiently absurd, they contrive to look at home on the stage, and are born actors of farce.

There is nowhere in Spain any subsidized theatre like the Français. The government has never patronized the stage, and if it did, it is very doubtful whether any three Spanish actors of note could be got to work together. But the national stage is probably not inferior to that of other European countries. The weak point is undoubtedly tragedy. The same weakness which makes the dignified Spaniard overact his part in private life drives Spanish histrions into fustian on the stage. In comedy they are infinitely better, and in the lower kinds of it are second to no people in the world, playing with an abandon and relish which seem to make their work a real pleasure to them.

The theatres are general meeting-places for the whole population. Numbers come apparently as much to

meet their friends as to witness the performance. As the right of entering the house is secured by a payment distinct from that required for the seat, the theatre lends itself easily to the purposes of a club, or assembly-room, between the acts. Men smoke in the passages or saloon, and even transact business there. In warm weather they use the gardens attached to the regular summer theatres. The ladies, meanwhile, carry on animated conversations with one another, or, with the help of their fans, with those of the other sex. This is one of the most cherished customs of a people very conservative of old customs. A young lady and gentleman will make signals to one another across a theatre with an absence of gêne which is pleasant to see, and an almost touchingly good-natured make-believe that they are doing something very secret and romantic.

Looking back from some resting-place in his *Pleasant Wanderings*, somewhere between 1593 and 1603, Agustin de Rojas, player and playwright, made a survey in poetic form of comedy, and in particular of Spanish comedy. Detailing its growth from its feeble infancy to the almost exuberant vigor of its early manhood, he dated the end of its childhood from the appearance on the stage of four well-marked characters who continued to occupy it to the end. These are the dama, or lady; the viejo, or old man, occasionally called barba, or beard; the galan, or lover, in his double character of accepted or rejected suitor; and the clown, at first styled the bobo, and later the gracioso. These characters were but rude and unpolished at first, but whatever change

they were to undergo was to be a change of form, not of character. The dramatists of the seventeenth century treated these types as the Spanish sculptors of the previous century had treated the traditional figures of Virgin and saint. They made works of art out of the rude attempts of earlier times, but it was by following the path their predecessors had pointed out. It is true that the later writers by no means confine themselves to four persons. Their stage is crowded by a far greater number; but when we examine them closely, we do not find that by increasing the dramatis personæ they have also increased the characters. Their greater wealth is shown somewhat like the alderman's increase of fortune, which he could only display by making two dishes smoke on the board where one had smoked before. *Lopé de Vega* or *Calderon*, finding the four too few for the proper development of their intricate plots, doubled or even trebled them. They added an old woman to the old man, a maid-servant to the gracioso; but these additions are, in fact, only repetitions of already existing types, which they never attempted to vary, any more than a chess-player attempts to alter his bishop or his knight

Characteristics of Comedy.

Spanish comedy has, indeed, a marked resemblance to a game of chess. The number of the pieces which are moved to and fro on the board is determined at least by a maximum, and therefore has an element of stability wanting to the personages of the comedy, but in other respects the resemblance is sufficiently close. The func-

tions and power of the rook are not more rigidly fixed by rule than the character and actions of the galan. One piece moves on the white square, another on the black, but in other respects they are identical. One galan is successfully loving and jealous, another is jealous and loving but unsuccessful; and except in the result, we can see no difference between them. On the chess-board and the stage alike, when once we have learned the character of the pieces our interest centres entirely in the moves. Even the historical characters—kings, queens and warriors—have to bow to traditional usages. They become viejos, damas and galanes when presented in a comedy, or, indeed, in dramas of a tragic nature; for it must be borne in mind that Spanish dramatists never divided their plays into tragedy and comedy, and that these terms applied indifferently to the same pieces.

But, although it would be difficult to select any number of personages from the works of the Spaniards which are interesting as delineations of human character, the general types have an undoubted literary value. They are generalizations of mankind as seen in Spain, presented not so as to be as close as possible to reality, but as best fitted for the purposes of the stage. Had the dramatist tried to be strictly true to life, he would have been met at the outset by an almost insuperable difficulty. His main subject is love, and the customs of all Southern nations in the matter of marriage render courtship quite superfluous. The Oriental jealousy of the Spaniard, and the strict supervision of the Church, debarred him from falling back on the resource found by

the modern French novelist in a similar difficulty. Conjugal infidelity might be the subject of tragedy, but, unless the Spanish dramatist intended to make his comedia depend for its interest on terror and the fiercer passions, he must leave it alone. The older writers seldom touched it. Having, then, to draw love ending in marriage, they were forced to represent it as breaking through social laws, and to give their characters, and in particular their women, a certain conventional character.

Sphere of Women.

What the domestic life of women was in Spain we have ample means of knowing. Without trusting altogether to comedies or novels, we get from them many ideas of what the reality was. We see that women lived in a degree of seclusion little less than Oriental, and in a perfectly Oriental dependence on the head of the family. We learn that marriage was, as still it is to a great degree, a mere matter of business arrangement, in which the inclination of the parties most interested is the last thing taken into consideration. The evidence of travellers completes that of the comedies, for they state deliberately, and with every appearance of founding their statements on careful observation, that the women of a Spanish family hold a position only a little higher than that of the servants, and enjoy infinitely less freedom. The heroine who is to marry the lover of her own choice against the wish of her parents, must therefore employ as much ingenuity, and display as much daring, as the prisoner who is breaking out of

jail. The opportunities which this situation offers for intrigue, plot, counterplot and incident, made it a great favorite among the Spaniards, to whom such things form the most delightful of recreations — when presented in the form of a story. No matter how much the details may vary, the situation and characters are always essentially the same. The main elements are passion and jealousy. The enamored dama must be ready to sacrifice herself and everybody else for the sake of her galan. Her sense of honor and delicacy may be painfully obtuse, but the readiness of her wit must be beyond dispute. She must be as easily inflamed with jealousy as with love, but ready to forgive much intermediate infidelity for the sake of final victory.

Spanish critics of modern date profess to find a distinct character, if not in individual heroines, in the damas of different writers; but a foreigner will find it impossible to distinguish between the Belisas, Teodoras and Elenas of Lope de Vega and the ladies of similar names who are the soul and life of the comedies of Tirso de Molina and Alarcon. As far as we can feel any human interest in the dramatis personæ of these bright pieces, it is almost entirely in the dama. She loves with such utter abandon, she sacrifices herself so readily for her generally unworthy lover, her resources are so many and so ingenious, her conversation so light and witty, that we cannot help thinking Don Felix or Don Felipe has been rewarded very much beyond his merits when the baffled but pacified father finally withdraws his opposition. But our sympathy is not for the individual, but for the type. We find all the heroines affecting us

in exactly the same way. Not only do we meet the same dama in every piece, but even twice or thrice in the same piece; and when at the end of the third act the author pairs off his damas and galanes, and winds up his tangled plot more or less neatly, we feel no more anxiety about the future happiness of the ladies than we do about the female dolls of an Italian puppet-show. We are so obviously looking at puppets that, when Doña Serafina, the second dama, after embroiling everything during three acts to prevent the marriage of Doña Beatriz, the first dama, to Don Garcia, the first galan, is given in marriage without a murmur to Don Lopé, the second galan, who philosophically accepts her as the next best thing to Doña Beatriz, we are neither shocked nor surprised. The bright little figure, in her picturesque dress, has finished the weeping, laughing, scolding and wooing she had to go through, and has gone back to her box to lie there till she is taken out to go through the same or a slightly varied round of emotions.

The Galan.

On the galan it is hard to look with any degree of tolerance. If the drama is an idealized type of the passionate and loving side of woman's nature we can only hope, for the credit of young Spain, that the artistic function of the galan is to give her full opportunity for self-sacrifice, not to represent anything already existing in life. Such writers as the Schlegels and Count Schack have dwelt in their writings at no small length on the lofty sense of honor displayed by the heroes of

Spanish plays, and what they say is true enough as to honor of the braggart and duelling type; but in the proper sense of the word nothing is more conspicuously absent from the character of the lover in Spanish comedy than a sense of honor or even of the commonest honesty. In *The Slave of Her Lover*, one of the most brilliant comedies in the Spanish language, "Lopé de Vega," says one of his critics, "has sounded all the depths of a woman's tenderness;" yet in this very piece he presents us with a hero—the object of this tenderness, which he is supposed to return—who is a masterpiece of selfish cowardice. He shows us this galan making love from the basest motives to another than the heroine, and, excusing himself, or at least accepting the excuse given by his valet, the gracioso, that "a few loving words are not a notarial act." In *The Dog in the Manger*, the cringing hero, after deserting a woman he has already promised to marry, for the sake of his mistress, a Spanish duchess of Malfy, receives, without wincing, a proposal to murder the servant to whom he owes all his good fortune, in order that he may thereby make his secrets safe. Yet in both cases the galan is presented to us as rather a fine fellow, nor is the slightest sense of their meanness displayed by any of the characters in the comedies. The hero of *The Dog in the Manger* is even allowed to boast of his natural frankness.

The Sense of Honor.

It is true that the word "honor" is forever on the lips of the galan. The very men who have just been dis-

playing a callous impudence in their actions are on fire in a moment to resent an offensive word, fighting with the readiness and zest of Bret Harte's California gamblers. Again they are represented, with an utter want of artistic consistency and truth to nature, as performing actions of more than human magnanimity. Their delicate sense of honor is a mere regard for public opinion. They are not accurate pictures of real men, but as dramatic types they throw a curious light on the moral condition of the people and time that produced them. They came into the world with those moral treatises of the Jesuits which have been consigned to an immortality of dishonor by Pascal. Comparing the frequent baseness of their conduct with their lofty pretensions and their curious touchiness about mere words, one is inclined to look for their model not in the instinctive purity of the ermine, as Schlegel did, but in the great principles of *Tartuffe*: "*Le scandale du monde est ce qui fait l'offense.*" For the rest there is no more variety of individual character in them than in their dramas. Even in comedies which are supposed to have been written with the express purpose of developing character we find not a human being with certain idiosyncrasies, but an embodied quality. But perhaps it is out of place to look on them as capable of either morality or immorality. The most satisfactory course is to treat them as Charles Lamb would have had us treat the personages of the drama of the Restoration; that is, as beings belonging to a fairy-land of intriguing comedy. Looked at from that point of view, we cannot fail to recognize their merits; but it is only from *this*

standpoint that we can concede their merits. Certainly this class of comedy does not teach true morality, any more than do the plays of Congreve, Wycherley and other Restoration dramatists; for we cannot accept as such the overstrained and somewhat squeamish "sense of honor," which then belonged to the Spanish character, as still in a measure it does.

Minor Characters.

The minor characters of almost all comedy exist for the purpose of helping or hindering the love affairs of the hero and heroine. This is their natural function on every stage, and on the Spanish more eminently than on any other. An English or French dramatist may give them an attraction of their own; he may even gain forgiveness, at least from his reader, for the introduction of a superfluous character by making it interesting in itself as a representation of human nature; but an unnecessary personage is unpardonable in a Spanish comedy. With us, to such characters as Launcelot Gobbo, in *The Merchant of Venice*, is allowed more of the stage than his importance in the working of the plot entitles him to; but, apart from the humor of his character, he has a distinct artistic function. He throws a light on the Jew's household and character. A Spanish dramatist might, perhaps, have abolished Gobbo, but more probably he would have kept him on the stage from first to last, made him the close attendant of Shylock or of Antonio, and an indispensable part of the machinery of the plot. He would have been, in short,

the gracioso of the piece, and have been employed in perpetually doing something—the point of interest to the Spanish audience being not the character of Jessica's father or of her home, but the exact method of her escape.

Such plot as the *Bourgeois Gentilhomme* possesses is in no wise helped by the dancing and fencing masters, tailors and philosophers who fill the stage around the central figure during the first two acts; but the whole interest of Molière's comedy is centred in the character of M. Jourdain, and, in so far as they illustrate that, these apparently superfluous figures have a truly artistic function to perform. But it is one which no Spanish audience would have understood. From their point of view, minor personages not engaged in helping on the action of the intrigue have no more business on the stage than a third knight on a chess-board. The ablest dramatists are no doubt guilty, in their inferior pieces, of multiplying the number of actors without increasing the number of characters; but the laws of a literature are to be deduced from its best, not from its worst, productions. If, then, we take any number of the masterpieces of the Spanish stage, and, disregarding all mere repetitions of the same type as superfluous, fix our attention on the general models, we find that to the last they were no more than developments of those mentioned by Agustin de Rojas in the *Viage Entretenido*. They include the old man—barba or viejo—or, rather, old age, of which the natural function in comic literature is to oppose the wishes and be baffled by the ingenuity of youth; and the servant, or gracioso, with his counterpart, the maid,

always the assistants, and frequently the inspirers of the lovers in their stratagems.

The Barba.

The natural position of the barba toward the heroine is that of father, the only one which gives him power to dispose of her hand; or he may stand in a similar position toward the hero. There are comedies, no doubt, in which he is neither. In the historical comedies the role of the viejo is often taken by the king, and in one, at least, of the comedies of Lopé de Vega he appears as the lover of the heroine; but in these cases his office of disturber of the course of true love is filled by a mother, aunt or, perhaps, elder brother exercising paternal power as the head of the house. Nevertheless, this is the normal function of the barba himself, and the character conferred on him by tradition is eminently well fitted for its discharge. He is choleric and self-willed to the last degree, always ready to arrange his daughter's marriage without consulting her on the subject, keeping his word at least to the ear with great tenacity, and, above all, ready to shed, like water, the blood of whosoever offends his honor. He threatens his children as if he possessed the power of life and death, and proposes to sacrifice young gentlemen, found under balconies at improper hours, with an utter disregard for life.

It is surely obvious that such a character as the viejo cannot be regarded as a truthful representation of anything in Spanish society. The blind want of criticism

which made Schack and others accept him as such is only in keeping with other learned absurdities which Germany has poured forth on the theatres of England and Spain; but the attempts of Ticknor, one of the best critics on the literature of the peninsula, to derive him and his sense of honor from the Goths are equally beside the mark. The *viejo* is simply the head of the ordinary Spanish family typified, and with his paternal powers, in reality very large, exaggerated to suit the *optique du théâtre*, by a race of dramatists possessing exaggerated notions of stage effect. His sense of honor is in perfect keeping with that of the *galan*. It is the honor of show and parade which makes him threaten with death a daughter who has been guilty of talking to an unauthorized lover from a balcony, and overlook as things of no moment a long course of mendacity and immorality which ends in a marriage. The whole subject is one that belongs properly to the drama of morals; but it is well to remember, if we wish to understand the meaning of the word honor in the dramatic literature of Spain, that the ideas of chastity which made Mary Lamb say she would not think Queen Caroline a better woman "if she were what you call innocent" are and always have been unintelligible to Spaniards. For the rest we cannot help liking the fiery, polite and somewhat addle-headed old graybeard. He plays his part with spirit, and always ends by coming to reason. A sense of what is due to the dignity of age kept Spanish writers from producing, and would have kept Spanish audiences from laughing at, the imbecile *père* of Molière's comedy. As with their sense of honor, so with their dignity, the

Spaniards carry both to excess, albeit they are entirely unconscious of the dignity of labor.

The Gracioso.

The barba takes precedence of the gracioso by right of his years and dignity, but he is a much less important or, at least, a much less necessary personage. The former may appear only at the beginning or the end of the piece, but the latter must be in sight throughout. He is always by the hero's side, ready to execute his plans and equally ready to inspire him; he carries messages, hoodwinks the watchful parent, makes love to the heroine's maid, or keeps watch while Don Juan is making love to Belisa in the balcony; but by far the most important of his duties is to make jokes for the groundlings. The character cannot be said to be peculiar to the Spanish stage. Under one shape or another he appears in all comedy — as the slave of Terence and Plautus, the clown of England and Germany or the valet in France. Stasimus is a gracioso, and so are Shakespeare's Launcelot Gobbo, and Molière's Covielle in the *Bourgeois Gentilhomme*. The scene in which Covielle and the heroine's maid echo and parody the quarrel of their master and mistress might be taken word for word from a comedy of Alarcon's or Calderon's.

But there is another character in *The Merchant of Venice* besides "good Master Gobbo" to whom the name of gracioso might almost be applied. Gratiano has many of his characteristics and the fact that Gratiano is no

mere lackey does not affect the question. The gracioso is a servant, but this was an age when one gentleman might, without loss of status, serve a man richer or more powerful than himself. The high and poetic loves of Portia and Bassanio are reflected and almost parodied by the loves of the retainer and the maid. This is a stock incident on the Spanish stage. The exact parallel maintained in the last acts between the offenses, excuses, pardon and final discoveries of the truth by the two husbands differs only in its infinitely superior beauty and taste from many a scene of Lope de Vega's. During the fourth act Gratiano's action has another resemblance to that of the gracioso. His taunts and railing at the Jew express the emotions of the spectator—of the spectator on the stage, at least—and he acts as choragus to the visible or invisible chorus who witness the action of the poem in the ideal poetic land in which it passes. He is a higher character than the gracioso, but he acts in an altogether higher world than that of the Spanish stage. The perpetual presence of the gracioso on the boards is at first sometimes difficult to explain. He is, indeed, a most useful fellow, but it is not always clear why he should be allowed to talk such "an infinite deal of nothing," and of singularly offensive nothing.

The Spanish comedy, like that of Shakespeare, deals with the tragic emotions of pity and terror, but it mingles its pity and terror with much vapid buffoonery. A French commentator defines Scapin as "*l'esclavage que se venge*," and many critics have boldly maintained that the Spanish Scapin, with his tasteless parody of

his master's doings, owes his existence to a profound artistic idea, but it is probable that much good philosophical criticism has been wasted in both cases. The rascally, self-seeking slave of Menander, who found his way, very little changed, on to the stages of modern Europe, came into existence because he was a useful factor in a comedy. Molière, a much deeper thinker than any of the Spaniards, used him as a mouthpiece by which to utter his keen observations of life; and Calderon or Lopé used him to make jokes, some good, many bad, but most of them indifferent. His parody of the hero is not due to an artistic desire to give the comic with the tragic side of every question; if it shows anything at all but the inborn love of the groundlings for buffoonery, it is their sense of the utter hollowness of the hero's grand sentiment. On what supposition, except want of taste or want of feeling, are we to account for such scenes as that in the *Magicó Prodigioso*, in which the gracioso burlesques his master's blood-signed contract with the fiend and strikes his own nose to make it bleed when he wants to sign? The Spaniards have always loved parody, and in their comedy they see no offense to taste when the fiery declamation of the galan is immediately echoed in a vulgar parody by the gracioso. Putting aside all idea of artistic intention on the part of the inventors of the gracioso, and accepting him as a necessary factor of the plot and the speaker of the jests by which the dialogue is salted, we find him often a very funny fellow. His familiarity with his master, which is necessary for the discharge of his duty, is natural enough in Spain; and his char-

acter, which varies as little as that of the other *dramatis personæ*, is well adapted for the stage. He is shrewd, greedy, cowardly, but faithful, with a defective sense of the importance of truth, but a good heart.

The other minor characters are mere repetitions of those sketched above. The maiden aunts and scheming widows are only the *barba* with a change of sex; the maid is the *gracioso* over again. The social follies of the day are now and then referred to and satirized; in historical comedies public officers appear, but there is no attempt to make them play a definite part, and for obvious reasons they are not ridiculed. Manners and men alike yield in importance to the plot and take a uniform character, that it may run the smoother.

Historical Characters.

Almost the only exceptions to the uniformity of type in the *dramatis personæ* of the Spanish stage are a limited number of historical personages who were dear to the heart and familiar to the imagination of the people, and who appear again and again. The number of historic plays is very great in Spanish literature. The dramatist, addressing himself, like his English contemporary, to the people at large and not, like the French school, to the highly cultivated society of a court, naturally drew his materials from the sources most familiar to his audience; and these were the ballads and the legends of saints. Pieces founded on the latter can hardly be classed with comedy, though there is no want of plays, professedly religious, which have an amorous

and intriguing character sufficiently at variance with their pious pretensions; but such pieces are only religious in name. The saint who figures in them serves to preserve dramatist and player from the "evil eye" of the Inquisitor, as the horseshoe on the barn-door kept out witches. The religious plays proper belong to a very different branch of literature. In their final form they are something peculiar to Spain and must be studied by themselves. They may here be left out of the question, since their object is the inculcation of morality or the teaching of dogma, and not the display of character. Their hero is always the conventional Catholic saint, a type which, on the stage or in the breviary, is not susceptible of much greater variety than the ordinary galan of comedy.

In most of the secular historical plays the Spaniard's preference for action over every other kind of dramatic element has made the writers careless enough about the characters they introduce. Probably the subject has been taken because it offered the materials for a good plot, and in that case characters and manners are alike an exact copy of the contemporary Spanish drama. Nero plays the guitar, makes love to a lady in a balcony and fights with and escapes from the alguacils at Rome. St. Cyprian and his contemporaries do the same in Antioch, while all talk in the inflated conventional style of the Spanish stage hero. This indifference to time and place is just as conspicuous, though perhaps not so obviously absurd, in pieces founded on old ballads. The Infantes of Lara and the Bastard Mudarra speak in an alembicated dialect very unlike the chronicles. But historical

events were made the subjects of plays for other than their merits as stories. Among a people who read very little, the stage is the one great means of expressing national sentiments of all kinds. Thus the unlettered Spaniard, whose whole intellectual food was his ballads and his lives of the saints, learned how Columbus discovered America from a play of Lope de Vega's, exactly as he gained his scanty knowledge of the events narrated in the New Testament from an auto. The gaining of a great victory or the surrender of an obstinately defended city in the Low Countries was immediately brought before the public; it would, perhaps, be too much to say that it was dramatized. The standing masks were transported to the scene of action, and the victorious general introduced into the midst of them in a sufficiently in-artistic way. Some of these generals would seem to have been exceptionally popular with Madrid theatre-goers, so popular as to induce writers of such assured eminence as Calderon to introduce them when there was no dramatic necessity for their appearance.

Ruy Díaz.

But in most of these plays we cannot help feeling that the audience is mainly interested in hearing its praises sung or in seeing three acts of lively movement. There are, however, some in which are embodied the national ideas of heroism, some through which the people, in the decay of their freedom, found a means of giving expression to their wishes for better government and, perhaps unconsciously, criticising their rulers. The

hero of these plays is not that type of Castilian chivalry and crusading zeal, the Cid. Ruy Diaz is the hero of the noblest historical play in the Spanish language, but it is a work which stands by itself. It may be doubted whether justice has ever been really done to the *Mocedades del Cid* of Guillen de Castro, and here no reference is made to the debt which Corneille owed him and loyally acknowledged. The admirers of the Spaniard, among whom his own countrymen have not been the most prejudiced, have unfortunately thought it necessary to be unjust to the great Frenchman who used his work, but who was in no sense his imitator, or else, like Lord Holland, they have erred on the side of condescension.

Guillen de Castro does not require the disparagement of other writers to maintain his high place in literature; still less does he want patronage. He should be compared, not to Corneille, who belonged to and wrote for an utterly different world, but to his successors in Spain. The comparison is wholly to the advantage of the Valencian poet. Writing before the overwhelming popularity of Lopé de Vega had fixed the national drama, he drew his inspiration straight from popular tradition and the ballads, using them as Corneille used them, and giving their spirit in a form of his own. What little addition he made to the received legends was just what was necessary to make the marriage of Jimena with the slayer of her father fit for dramatic representation. In all other respects he has kept to the spirit of the times with a fidelity that will make his work forever fresh and delightful. The flowing ease of his verse, the per-

fect truth to nature of his passion, the absence of self-consciousness and affectation in his characters place his work apart among Spanish historical plays. When, in the second part, he makes Doña Urraca reproach the Cid from the walls of Zamora in the very words of the old ballad, we feel that they are in perfect keeping with his own verse. They would have been strangely out of keeping with the conceits, quibbling and overstrained sentiment of later men. But Guillen de Castro belonged to the school of Valencia, which preceded the efflorescence of Lopé's drama in Madrid, and so had the good fortune to escape the blight of bad taste called "cultismo," which fell on the Spanish literature of the seventeenth century.

It is surely characteristic of the then state of the Spanish drama that "the greatest Castilian" should have temporarily ceased to be a hero, and that his next important appearance on the stage should be in Diamante's poor imitation of Corneille. Perhaps his countrymen were guided by a just instinct in thus neglecting the hero, whose character was hardly in keeping with that of the willing slaves of the Phillips and the inquisition. The pious hatred of infidels of which the *Cid* of poetry, though not the Cid of history—a daring free lance and only half a Christian—was the great type, found, however copious expression. Lopé dramatized events of the last war against Granada, and Calderon chose for one of his heroes a Portuguese prince, who elected to live a slave among infidels rather than suffer himself to be ransomed by the surrender of a city which his Christian countrymen had won from the Moslem. There is not

wanting in their works a certain nobility of sentiment, a worthy poetic expression of the undying hate which made the bearers of the cross refuse to recognize the intrusion of the crescent as legitimized by any length of existence among them, while it could still feel that the Moor, too, was a soldier and a gentleman. But this is not the general attitude of the Spaniard of the seventeenth century toward his conquered enemy. The hate of the Inquisitor is more common among them than that of the patriot. There is little trace of the liberality which made the unknown writer of the old ballad rebuke the betrayer of the Infantes of Lara by the example of Moorish chivalry. We more commonly find the barbarous fanaticism of the contemporary historian, who tells how in his youth he saw the Andalusian riders return from forays against the Moors with the heads of their slaughtered enemies hanging from their saddle-bows, and throw the trophies to their children to play with. Bigotry was held to excuse even profanity. The Inquisition, which worried the saintly Luis de Leon for translating the *Song of Solomon* into the vernacular, allowed a troop of players to perform a piece written by a churchman, based on the story that the knights of St. Iago refused to accept Jesus of Nazareth as their patron because he was a Jew. It may be doubted whether even Voltaire would have ventured so far.

Peter II.

But the subject of Spanish history plays is not always war or crusading or bigotry, or even love. The best of

them, always excepting Guillen de Castro's, deal with the relation of subject and sovereign. The historic figure which towers "from the sword-hilt upward" over all others on the Spanish stage is that of Peter I of Castile. The name of this famous king is commonly associated with the epithet cruel, but the men of the sixteenth century found another—*el Justiciero*—the just but not merciful. Well-nigh every dramatist from Lope de Vega downward has brought him on the stage, and all are unanimous in the character they give him. He is the Haroun-al-Rashid of Spanish literature. If the comparative neglect of the Cid is suggestive, still more so is the abiding popularity of his king. The monarchy was so great a thing in Spain in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that we can well understand how it should have gathered around it a vast body of legend and poetry. But why should it have been typified by this man? How came it that story-teller and dramatist should have passed over Ferdinand the Saint, the deliverer of Andalusia, or James of Aragon, the conqueror of Valencia, or even Peter's own father, Alfonso, who freed Spain forever from the fear of Moorish invasion by his great victory on the Rio Salado? And Peter did many of those things "against which," the Inquisition might have told him, "damnation is denounced, and for which hell-fire is prepared." His chosen ministers were Jews; his guards were Moors; he hunted his enemies down like game, and he brought a foreign prince and army into Castile. The people forgot all these crimes, and even those dramatic murders for which their memory is particularly tenacious, and

remembered only that throughout his reign he had protected the humble and had warred down the proud. In crushing the great nobles he was fighting their battle, and therefore they made him a type of a just and perfect king.

It has been sometimes maintained that the latter-day popularity of Peter was due to mere sycophancy, and in individual cases it may have been so. Learned professors and slavish courtiers were doubtless to be found in plenty, ready to flatter their master by lauding a despot born before his day; but the cruel king had always had his tradition. His death and his love for Maria de Padilla had been the subject of pitying ballads, and a host of popular traditions existed, in which he figured as the king of the Commons, the disguised sovereign who steps in between the oppressive noble and the weak man of the people. We know that Peter was fighting purely for the royal power; but men of the following centuries, groaning under aristocratic anarchy, may be excused for thinking that it was better to pay tribute to one eagle than to a hundred vultures. So this man, who, as Froissart had heard tell, was little better than a pagan, became the type of law and order and even-handed justice for everybody. It is, perhaps, only reasonable to suppose that he was held up as an example to later sovereigns, who, with far more than his power, had none of his will to use it. When Moreto brings the king, the representative of all law, face to face with the noble who defies all law, or Alarcon shows him throwing into prison a favorite accused of a shameful misuse of his favor, it is probable that they were

reading a lesson to the actual occupant of the throne. Such, at least, was the unconscious meaning of Peter's popularity. He is the Spaniard's ideal of a king, a European Koshru Nushirvan, protecting the poor man's life or goods, and soothing his envy by striking down every head that towered above its fellows. Nor is that ideal much changed at the present day, as must be apparent to all who study the political conditions of Spain. Peter is still applauded on the stage, and we have Señor Castelar's own democratic word for it that Spain must be governed by "a man with a stick." This vulgar modern substitute for the rod of justice is, in the Spaniard's opinion, the best ornament of a sovereign's hand, and he loves to see it smite—particularly the great.

Portuguese Drama.

In connection with the drama of Spain may be briefly mentioned that of Portugal, and first it may be said that many poets of the latter nation used the language of both—the Portuguese for soft and impassioned sentiment, and the Spanish for elevated and heroic thoughts. Our knowledge of Portuguese poetry is, indeed, almost restricted to the *Lusiad* of Camoens, one of the world's great epics, though others, as Ribeyro and Macias, Saa de Miranda, Montemayor and Ferreira, were by no means destitute of merit. The Portuguese cared for only two species of poetry, the epic and the pastoral, and to the latter they attached themselves with remarkable pertinacity, transferring the thoughts and actions of the existing world to nymphs and shep-

herds, though nothing could be more contrary to dramatic life and action.

Saa de Miranda.

One of the first among the classic writers of Portugal was Saa de Miranda, who, in imitation of Italian authors, attempted to confer on his country a drama similar to that of the Romans. He emulated Ariosto and Machiavelli, Plautus and Terence, producing, among others, two plays which may be referred to the class of erudite comedy in the literature of Italy. One of them is entitled *The Strangers* and the other *Os Villalpandios*, the latter term referring to two Spanish soldiers introduced on the scene. The action is placed in Italy, but the author would have done better if he had introduced the manners of his native country, with which he was conversant. In parts the dialogue, written in prose, is in evident imitation of Terence, but is very spirited. As in his eclogues he had refined and elevated the language of shepherds, so in his representations of common life Miranda sought to give dignity to his subject.

Inez de Castro.

One of the most famous of Portuguese tragedies is Ferreira's *Inez de Castro*, based on the well-known story which has since been so often dramatized. He raised himself far above the contemporary writers of Italy, taking the Greeks as his model, for he had no other. The drama of Spain was not yet in existence

and that of Italy was only just coming into notice; yet, in some of the passages, we are strongly reminded of the stately language of Alfieri. Among others belonging to the classical school are Jorge Ferreira de Vasconcellos, the author of several comedies and of a romance founded on the Round Table; Estivan Rodriguez de Castro, physician and lyric poet, and Fernando Rodriguez Lobo de Soropita, who edited the poems of Camoens.

The Lusiad.

But there is one man who stands alone, in whom is centred the literary glory of his times, and whose works have been more widely read than those of all the other poets of the Portuguese nation. That man is Luis de Camoens, the chief and almost the only literary boast of his country, the sole poet of Portugal whose celebrity has extended beyond the peninsula, and whose name may be ranked among the great ones of the earth. As with Shakespeare, such is the force of genius in a single individual, that in him is mainly concentrated the literary renown of an entire nation, standing in solitary grandeur before the eyes of posterity, while a crowd of lesser objects disappears in its superior light.

In his great epic of the *Lusiad*, on which the fame of Camoens mainly rests, it seems to have been his object to produce a work altogether national. Though the chief subject of the poem is the Portuguese conquests in India, the author has included all the great exploits achieved by his compatriots in other quarters of the world, together with whatever of splendid and

heroic deeds historical narration or popular fable could supply. In the opening lines the object of the *Lusiad* is clearly expressed :

Arms and the heroes, who from Lisbon's shore,
Through seas where sail was never spread before,
Beyond where Ceylon lifts her spicy breast,
And waves her woods above the wat'ry waste,
With prowess more than human forc'd their way
To the fair kingdoms of the rising day:
What wars they wag'd, what seas, what dangers past,
What glorious empire crown'd their toils at last,
Vent'rous I sing, on soaring pinions borne,
And all my country's wars the song adorn;
What kings, what heroes of my native land
Thunder'd on Asia's and on Afric's strand:
Illustrious shades, who levell'd in the dust
The idol-temples and the shrines of lust;
And where, erewhile, foul demons were rever'd,
To holy faith unnumber'd altars rear'd:
Illustrious names, with deathless laurels crown'd,
While time rolls on in every clime renown'd!

While the *Lusiad* is not dramatic in form, it is intensely dramatic in tone, for it is no mere history in verse, but a veritable poem, investing its subject with a passionate, if visionary, emotion, and filled with richness and variety of detail. With all the enthusiasm of Tasso and all the luxurious fancy of Ariosto he enjoyed an advantage over both in combining the finest affections of the heart and soul with the glowing pictures of the imagination. But that which essentially distinguishes him from the Italians, and which forms the everlasting monument of his own and his country's glory, is the national love and pride breathing through

the entire work. It was written at a time when the fame of his country had risen to its highest pitch, when the world appeared to have assumed a different aspect under the influence of the Portuguese, and when the most important objects had been attained by the smallest of states. Portugal at this time had risen from being a mere district or county to a foremost rank among the nations of the earth, her exploits even surpassing those of Spain.

The work is the more remarkable as being written by a man who passed his life amid poverty and hardship, serving for many years in the Indies and at one time suffering shipwreck at the mouth of the Gambia, losing all his effects saving only the *Lusiad*, soaked with the waves through which he bore it to shore. So many and aggravated were his sufferings that, returning to his native land when past middle life, Camoens was seized with a violent fever, and, unhonored and unknown, the man who had shed lustre on his country died in a public hospital. "Who would have believed," he wrote when on his death-bed, "that on so small a theatre as this wretched couch, Fortune would delight in exhibiting so many calamities?" More than two centuries later this neglect and indifference were partly atoned for by José Maria de Souza Botalho, who devoted his time and fortune to producing a suitable memorial to the first of Portuguese poets. In 1817 he caused to be published in Paris a splendid edition of the *Lusiad*, embellished with all that the arts of typography, design and engraving could contribute. He would not permit a single copy to be sold, but pre-

sented one to each of the principal libraries in Europe, Asia and America.

Gil Vincente.

In the dramatic field the literature of Portugal is extremely barren, only one name, that of Gil Vincente, requiring special mention. Others produced merely comedies and tragedies borrowed from classic authors, as did Camoens himself in his *Amphitryon* and *Seleucus*. Gil Vincente was, in a measure, the founder of the Spanish theatre, serving as the model on which Lopé de Vega and Calderon established a more perfect drama. In his rude attempts we find all the defects exemplified in the romantic drama of the Castilians; yet there is a certain fertility of invention, an air of probability in the dialogue, and an animation and poetical smoothness of language which justified the high character enjoyed in his own country as well as abroad. His weakest productions are those entitled comedies, resembling rather novels in dialogue, feeble in plot and development and with incidents ill-connected. His tragi-comedies are merely rough outlines, though they afterward led the way to the heroic comedy of the Spaniards. His best works are entitled farces, though approaching much nearer to comedy than such as were written under that name. They exhibit much spirit in style, much discrimination of character, but there is little invention in plot.

At times, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the promise of a Portuguese drama began to show itself in Lisbon. Especially did this appear in a

series of comic operas, played without the recitative and probably with borrowed music, in the manner of French vaudeville. They were written by a Jew named Antonio José, and though coarse and illiterate, contained a genuine vein of humor and gayety, together with a certain vigor of subject and diction. For several years the people flocked in crowds to see them, and the nation seemed to be on the point of possessing a drama of its own, when José was seized and burned by order of the Inquisition at an auto-da-fé held in 1745. Thereupon the managers closed the theatre, alarmed lest a similar fate should overtake themselves.

Among others who attempted from time to time to fill the void in the national literature was Antonio Correa Garcao, who attempted to reform the stage and to present his country with some pieces written in imitation of Terence. The first, entitled *Theatro Novo*, was rather a sketch of the principles of dramatic art than a comedy proper. Another, named *Assemblea*, was a satire on the fashionable world.

Osmia.

In 1778, the academy of Sciences having offered a prize for the best Portuguese tragedy, conferred it on *Osmia*, which proved to be by the countess de Vimeiro, though the name of the authoress long remained unknown. On opening the sealed envelope accompanying the piece there was found only a direction, in case the play should prove successful, to devote the proceeds to the cultivation of olives as an industry from which

Portugal might derive great advantage. In *Osmia* the countess displays a singular purity of taste, an exquisite delicacy of feeling and an interest derived rather from sentiment than from actual occurrences, as is natural with her sex. The piece is composed in rhymed iambic verse and is one of the best which the Portuguese theatre can be said to possess.

To the above might be added the names of many recent writers, as of Manoel, Azavedo, Gomez, Cardoso and Valladarez, but after the seventeenth century the Portuguese theatre was mainly given over to Italian opera and Spanish comedy, and its further annals need not here detain us.

HYMEN,

(COMEDIA HIMENEA.)

OF

BARTOLOMÉ DE TORRES NAHARRO.

(Translated by W. H. H. Chambers.)

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

HYMEN, a Lover.

BOREAS, } *his Servants.*
ELISO, }

PHEBE, his Sweetheart.

MARQUIS, her Brother.

DORESTA, her Maid.

TURPEDIO, a Page.

MUSICIANS, who speak and sing.

Hymen.

It should here be explained that the word "day" is the technical name simply, in the early Spanish drama, for those divisions known later as acts.

ARGUMENT.

Day first.—Hymen, the lover of Phebe, is roaming late at night about the dwelling of his lady-love, accompanied by his servants; these he leaves to mount guard about her door while he goes to arrange for the early morning serenade. The servants, once alone, speedily show their cowardice, and when the marquis, brother of Phebe, arrives with Turpedio, his page, they flee. The marquis, suspicious of his sister's honor, as he has learned of the frequency of Hymen's serenades, wishes to awaken her, but is dissuaded by Turpedio's excellent reasons, and both retire.

Day second.—Hymen returns, accompanied by his servants and a few musicians, who sing to the picking of their guitars some amorous verses. Phebe suddenly appears at the window and speaks with Hymen, to whom she promises, after much urging, that her door shall be left open the following night. Hymen leaves, filled with joyful hopes. The marquis and Turpedio see them at a

distance as they retire; the marquis wishes to engage with them, but is persuaded by the page to postpone his vengeance until they are better armed.

Day third.—Boreas reprehends Eliso for not being willing to accept some presents offered by their master to both. Doresta, Phebe's maid, comes to the window; Boreas pays his addresses to her and begs that the following night, when Hymen comes to see her mistress, she will permit him, Boreas, to enter. Doresta concedes this favor, and he and Eliso leave. Turpedio now appears and speaks to Doresta, but she spurns him, and they separate after many harsh words.

Day fourth.—Hymen charges his servants to guard carefully the door and enters Phebe's house, while Boreas and Eliso remain in the street, trembling with fear. The marquis appearing, with his page, the servants fly, leaving behind their master's mantle on the ground. From this the marquis infers that Hymen is within with his sister. Wild with rage, he breaks down the door to seek them.

Day fifth.—Phebe comes out of the house, fleeing before her brother, who follows with a naked sword; she begs him to spare her lover, confesses her love and claims she is not guilty, simply unfortunate in this love. The marquis wishes to blot out the stain upon his honor with her blood, and is about to kill her, when Hymen arrives and with great tact and courtesy softens the marquis, obtains his pardon and, finally, the happy permission to wed his sister.

DAY FIRST.

SCENE—Street in front of the Marquis' house. Night.

Enter Hymen, Boreas and Eliso.

Hymen.—(Before a closed window.) May God preserve, sweetheart mine, your gracious presence, my sole felicity! It is too bold, perchance, to thus enslave myself without permission, but, blinded by love at a glance, it was too late to speak before I thought upon my fate. Of love for you I am dying, and yet you leave me here out in the street, making my misfortunes public; like those sportsmen who, satisfied to have killed the game, abandon it to the dogs. Where'er I be, there shall I complain of your injustice, for I bear you in my heart, while you leave me in the street. Ought you to permit him to suffer and die for you, who has committed no fault?

Boreas.—Now, we're commencing once more to speak of our great chagrin!

Hym.—What are you saying, you rascal?

Bor.—I say, sir, that we had better go; we can return to-morrow; then perhaps we'll stand a better chance.

Hym.—No; go, rather, and find my guitar; I'll sing airs so full of passion that all the world will be touched, save her, whose heart is insensible to pity.

Bor.—You cannot pick it, sir; it lacks one string, and the others are badly frayed.

Hym.—It matters little; bring it hither, the burden of my sorrow will accord it.

Bor.—Even though you grow angry, sir, I must insist we'd better leave.

Hym.—Is it already time to sleep?

Bor.—Rather time to get up, sir.

Hym.—Silence, you fool; you little know my pangs of love.

Bor.—You make a great mistake, sir, if you think me such a clown. I am well assured that the pain you conceal is greater far than what you show; I know that if you die for her no one can blame, since persons have been known to die of love for

this lady, who, indeed, have known her not save by reputation, and who counted so sweet a death precious quite as life itself.

Eliso.—That's the way to talk, we'll get on!

Hym.—What's that you're muttering between your teeth, you lazy hulk?

Eli.—I say that doubtless we shall soon be obliged to take him to the other madmen in the asylum at Valencia.

Hym.—May the evil eye seize you! And who is it you must take to Valencia? Dare you speak so of me?

Eli.—You said so, not I, sir.

Hym.—Oh you ass, you imbecile!

Eli.—But even if I am, sir, it will not be well for your lordship to be found here. The marquis, Phebe's brother, is often in this street. He has good servants, you have better; however, take my advice, throw love to the dogs and save us broken heads.

Hym.—I shall remain; let those who fear leave.

Eli.—Very well, sir, to prove how much we fear, and to judge our valor, retire yourself; we'll remain here and answer if they appear.

Hym.—Watch with care, there's sure to be more than two of them.

Eli.—Let ten come, fiends take them; they'll not go away bragging.

Bor.—Yes, let them come, provided they don't flee——

Hym.—If they say nothing to you, do not attack them. Make as little noise as possible. And for my sweetheart's sake, should they be insolent, content yourself with badly scaring them.

Eli.—Go calmly, sir, and let us act; we'll not let your name be dragged in the dirt.

Bor.—Speak low, and let us know what's best to be done.

Hym.—I caution you, *Eliso*, to be constantly on guard.

Eli.—You are too kind, my friend, since I know so well how to guard myself against the perils of this world. (*Hymen leaves.*)

Bor.—Now that we are alone, let us save our skins in some secure place like two good comrades; to fly from care and to avoid blows, what better could we do?

Eli.—At this moment I love you more than ever!

Bor.—I should like, however, to confide in you some things about a certain girl of mine, who is deeply smitten. But, to tell the truth, I feel ill at ease here.

Eli.—Have no fear, we can chat in peace, for if we hear anyone coming we can both run well.

Bor.—But perhaps we cannot, the street may be occupied.

Eli.—Even if it should be, we can yet escape, by the moon's favor, among the ruins of these fallen buildings, without being seen. We shall save our lives with our honor unblemished.

Bor.—By the Powers above, you speak well; I quite agree with you—but, look there, in that corner, I see something, I know not what.

Eli.—It's nothing save the shadow of the wall.

Bor.—But look you well in every part.

Eli.—I have looked closely; it is as I tell you.

Bor.—In truth I swear there was not left a drop of blood in my veins.

Eli.—Overcome these fears, else, should need arise, you cannot run. Please me with your tale of love, while both watch to see when we must run.

Bor.—Since you wish to know my little love affair, I will tell you the truth. When our master, Hymen, became enamored with his Phebe, I fell in love with Doresta, her maid; she is a pretty, gentle creature, in beauty like her mistress; in fact, I know no girl that is her equal.

Eli.—But have you spoken to her? Do you know she loves you? Look out lest you strike a snag.

Bor.—Without having spoken I can swear she loves and longs for me, unless her eyes have played me false.

Eli.—As for me, I believe in a girl's love only when, like Saint Thomas, I have felt the wound.

Bor.—I am sure her love equals mine.

Eli.—And have you not heard the maxim: Unhappy he that places faith in man? If that be true of man, how much more unhappy he that places faith in woman. One must learn to enjoy without being shorn, to hear and not to credit, to possess and to renounce woman. Still, I do not say it as their enemy.

Bor.—That's to be rude and boorish. It's easy to be seen, my comrade, that love has left you untouched as yet, else you would not think the true lover so free to act. He that loves sincerely abandons his liberty from the first day, and can do nothing not commanded by love. It is not well to judge and to blame others in unknown matters. If you do not love, yet shall you love; if you do not suffer, you shall suffer one day; you shall fall in the snare and give love your whole confidence, applauding its pains. In vain you say to-day: Fountain, I will not drink of your waters. It is woman that gives honor and pleasure to life.

Eli.—Your argument is vigorous, but directed against an unarmed knight. It's useless to kick against the pricks, or whistle jigs to a mile-stone. Our time would be better employed if spent in search of something to break our fast. Let us go.

Bor.—All right, though I do not care to eat so early. (They leave.)

Enter the Marquis and Turpedio.

Turpedio.—(Loudly.) Who goes there? You answer, perhaps fight with your feet? Return awhile, my gallant fellows, and carry away something for boasting.

Marquis.—Who was it, Turpedio?

Tur.—I know not; doubtless some dastardly mantle thieves.

Marq.—Couldn't you recognize them? Make haste, perhaps it's Hymen.

Tur.—By all that's holy, sir, I think not. They would not have taken flight.

Marq.—Rather, he's sure to flee to save discovery.

Tur.—It may be, but still he comes each day and night with serenades and morning songs.

Marq.—Dares he to continue this, I swear by all that's holy, I'll shorten his steps.

Tur.—Why bother yourself, sir? It is a pastime of the palace, a custom of the court; without it we should have none worthy of the name. Let him regale the girl.

Marq.—I love revelry myself, but by all that's holy, not before my own door, and I have known more than one which, beginning in song, has ended in tears.

Tur.—I suspect what disquiets you, but be at ease, my mistress Phebe is not one to doubt. What a maid to dupe!

Marq.—Let us knock on the door and see what happens. I cannot leave without speaking to her.

Tur.—But she is not yet awake, sir; and it will be ill-bred to waken all the street.

Marq.—Where shall we go, then?

Tur.—To Silleria street, sir; it soon will be daylight, and that lady you know there will open to us and we can breakfast.

Marq.—No, let us remain; it is nearly time for the day-break treat of morning song; if her lover is coming he will certainly soon be here. Let's stay and see what sort of a song and dance he gives her.

Tur.—But he isn't coming with dancers, sir, although we've been dancing attendance upon his coming for ten hours or more, tramping about this town, with little profit or honor. 'Tis well, perhaps, for the young—males, of course—to take a stroll after supper, but to remain without, as we have, is to pass the bounds of sense.

Marq.—So be it, we'll sleep till day and leave my sister tranquil. To-morrow I'll know what's up. Give me my guitar awhile, I'll twang it as we go to the house of my charmer; she that wishes still to play the virtuous.

Tur.—'Tis but a play, sir.

DAY SECOND.

SCENE—The same as day first.

Enter Hymen, Eliso and Boreas.

Boreas.—There's no one here, sir.

Hymen.—Speak lower, I fear some one may be near.

Bor.—No, I watched them go singing down that street to the right, sir; they are already far.

Hym.—All right, call our musicians and let them give our morning song.

Eliso.—Here they come.

Hym.—Call them; what is detaining them?

Eli.—(To the musicians, unseen as yet.) Come, move on, what are you waiting for?

Hym.—Speak lower, you rascal. What cries are those I hear?

Eli.—I've already called them more than once. Do you expect me to carry them here on my back?

Hym.—Now, don't spoil my fun; be quiet here; at home you can grumble and growl as much as you please.

Enter the Musicians.

First Musician.—What shall we do, sir?

Hymen.—Why, strike up at once, of course.

Second Musician.—(To the first.) Oh let up on that discord!

Fir. Mus.—Let up yourself, you imbecile!

Sec. Mus.—Listen to the vulgar fellow. (Turning to Hymen.) What do you wish us to sing and play, sir?

Hym.—The couplets first, and then the chorus. I pray you, however, make your accents so soft and touching that my sorrow may be detected in your voices; perhaps, too, that may relieve my pain. (The musicians play and sing awhile.)

Hym.—That's enough for to-day, my friends; short and sweet pleases best. Besides, the lady has appeared at the window; I wish to speak to her. Go, and may God go with you! (The musicians leave.)

Boreas.—Mark, sir, now's your time.

Hym.—O happiness, greatest of happiness!

Phebe, at the window.

Phebe.—But who are you?

Hymen.—He who was not, nor shall be an hour, were you to die.

Phe.—I do not understand you, sir; I'm not good at riddles; you'll have to speak more clearly.

Hym.—I perish for this very reason, that you do not understand me, while you understand so well how to slay me.

Phe.—May I ask your name?

Hym.—Think of the love that your beauty inspires and the fire your love kindles and you will know who I am.

Phe.—Gentleman, I beg you, tell me your name.

Hym.—I am he who lives alone in you, devoted to adore and eager to do homage to you. I am the unfortunate Hymen, who, had he no hopes in your bounty, would not wish to know you, for while you were still unknown has he suffered much sorrow for you and would willingly die, though his death would do you no service. But since you grant me life, I hold it to be well used if, while employed by you, I lose it.

Phe.—I pray you will pardon me, sir, but I do not know you.

Hym.—Then I sink into oblivion.

Phe.—No, I should put you in a better place than that, though I lose by it.

Hym.—I gain so much love that I cannot think of loss. However, if I merit love at all, it seems that you owe me more, since I suffer less than I merit.

Phe.—I am pleased to hear you talk, yet saddened by your complaints. Pray believe me, sir, I wish I were able to relieve and so could serve you.

Hym.—I would to God that to cure my ills, which have no hope except in you, you were as willing as you are able!

Phe.—I would that God had granted me the gift to heal by touch!

Hym.—This and all other gifts lie within your bounty, since God has created you so beautiful, but I, though unworthy, need only your volition.

Phe.—You merit more than you ask, though I know not what it is. I shall do it with willing heart, if, as you say, it is possible, though I fear harm.

Hym.—How happy you make me, sweetheart mine! You have understood me well. I do not wish to detain you longer,

your heart will tell you what I ask; my love is worthy of those favors, which to the grantor seem hardest to bestow, are esteemed the most—such is the boon I ask of you.

Phe.—But tell me clearly in what manner I can serve you.

Hym.—That when I come to-night your door may be opened to me.

Phe.—God protect me!

Hym.—What, my sweetheart, you revoke the favor?

Phe.—Yes, it would hardly be proper for me to open my door at such an hour.

Hym.—You promised me, however.

Phe.—How can you ask to have the door opened, when at such hours men are apt to be discourteous.

Hym.—Do not speak thus, sweetheart mine; if you wish to cure the ills I suffer, seek not to withdraw your promise. You know that my love forbids me to displease you, and you ought not to offer such a weak excuse. Your refusal will cost my life.

Phe.—I can no longer resist your importunity, nor do I wish to be at war with you. If you come, I shall do what you ask, but you must be what you ought.

Hym.—I must be your slave, a captive to your charms. I leave happy with the grace I have received.

Phe.—Go, and may God go with you!

Hym.—My sweetheart, may he remain with you! (*Phebe retires from the window.*)

Boreas.—(*Coming forward.*) Since you have now obtained your longed-for wish, redeem your pledge to us; the gifts you promised for this happy event.

Hym.—Most willingly, my brothers; it is but right that I should do so. You, take this satin blouse; and you, this doublet of brocade. Another day I'll give you greater value.

Bor.—May God keep you in his memory, and may you grow in fame and honor without a peer! May you be so great a victor that nothing may be wanting to your desire, since you do not lack gifts nor hesitate to give them.

Eliso.—I do not wish your brocade; it is neither just nor

right that you denude yourself to dress your servants. Have better sense; such generosity is folly.

Bor.—You are right.

Hym.—I wish to give not only this, but more.

Eli.—We do not wish a hair.

Hym.—Why?

Eli.—Because we do not wish it, sir; besides, it is more fitting that you shine than we, sir.

Hym.—Be still, my brothers, be what you will; if I do not die I shall give you more than clothes and jewels. I am to you a brother, not a master.

Eli.—For this, sir, we take the will for the deed, with many thanks. If you will permit us, however, to retire, it will please us more. It will soon be day, and we can return this evening, Boreas and I, and reconnoitre as we promenade.

Hym.—So be it. May God protect my Phebe! (He leaves with his servants.)

Enter the Marquis, with Turpedio.

Turpedio.—Hist, hist, sir, listen; did you see where they were going? They doubtless came from here.

Marquis.—Oh, the devil! why were we retarded? they would not have got away.

Tur.—Let them go, sir, don't let it worry your lordship; the coming night they cannot escape us; we're sure to entrap them.

Marq.—How can we arrange things so that I can see everything? for though it cost my life and all I have, I am determined to know just what is going on. And if I find them together, I promise the true God, on the faith of a gentleman, to kill them both. Life is well lost for honor.

Tur.—We must arrive first, sir. Concealed in the corner of that street, we can see all without being seen, and from there, if we watch sharply, we can see him enter. Immediately we will charge and take the door, then you may do your will.

Marq.—It is a good plan, and without waiting longer let us break our fast and sleep the balance of the day, since we

must be wide awake this night. It will be well, perhaps, to be accompanied, else seeking wool we may return shorn.

Tur.—You and I, my lord, with the aid of God, will suffice. Besides, a secret known to more than two ceases to be one. So, if you think it well, we will come alone, that it may not be known whether your sister conducts herself ill or no. We must be prudent, for your honor depends on the course we adopt.

Marq.—That is why I wish to be accompanied; I do not wish my vengeance to fail me.

Tur.—As to that, you may be sure lovers do not wish numerous companions; if accompanied at all, only his two servants will be with him, and these fellows fall over each other in their haste to escape the shadow of a projecting roof.

Marq.—Yet his lance has already gained him fame.

Tur.—What care we for that or his arms. They are not Hannibals. Let us arrive well armed and we two can easily master four of them, if need be.

Marq.—I yield to your counsel and confide in you; still, we had better leave, for fear we may be overheard. For intrigue, walls have ears.

DAY THIRD.

SCENE—The same as the preceding day.

Enter Boreas and Eliso.

Boreas.—Now then, Eliso, my comrade, though I desire neither to tire nor to vex you, still my confidence in you and my affection compel me to unburden myself. I hope you will not get angry. Good servants ought to be loyal and faithful to their master, but not to such an extent as to affect their pockets. You will readily recall that last night you did not wish to accept the present offered by Hymen, and I, on your account, also refused mine. Do not tell me it is loyalty; I call it by its right name, utter folly, the greatest I have ever seen you commit, since you have lost the price of ten years' service.

Eliso.—Do not wonder at my refusal of his present; in truth, I felt ashamed to see him dressed more poorly than you

or I. If when rich he forgets us he must answer to God; meanwhile, we shall live, nor shall we lack something to cover our nakedness.

Bor.—In vain you seek to excuse yourself with so poor a reason. No one but a fool, when he can have two mantles, contents himself with one, and even if good servants should resent the poverty of their master, this is not a case in point, as our master is rich, as I reckon, having always at his service a thousand ducats. I must say that, knowing you to be a sensible fellow, I am astonished that you do not consider, whatever presents he may give us, that he does not pay as well as we serve. Frequently he allows himself to be robbed down to his shirt by rascally sharps. Think, you are spending youth and toil in his service.

Eli.—Boreas, whatever you say, you do not search another master. I'll risk an eye you cannot find a better; all of them make faithful servants suffer and are prodigal to those who have no need. They give bread to those wanting teeth.

Bor.—It often happens that they keep the wages of our long labor; hence, we must be careful to receive with open hands what they give and ask for what remains to them. We are obliged not only to work with all our might, but must work hard to get our pay. It is death in life.

Eli.—I mark well what you say, my comrade, and henceforth shall follow your advice. I regard as lost all the time I have spent without consulting you, and since it is clear that you are right and I wrong, I confess my folly, acknowledge your superiority, and from this very day you will see that I know how to obey your commands.

Bor.—It pleases me, brother Eliso, to see that, like an honest fellow, you hope for good and refuse what is bad. Let us be on guard, else the almshouse awaits our old age. Without shame or fear, if a finger be offered you, seize the entire hand, so that you in turn can be generous.

Eli.—That's enough; I've had all I want, and more, of poverty. We agree on this point and, having thrashed it over pretty well, let's drop it. The time is ripe; speak to Doresta, whom I see at the window.

Bor.—I see her. My wish is granted!

Eli.—Go then, and speak to her; I'll remain around here and listen to what you say and how you say it, so that I can learn to court, too.

Bor.—You can't fool me. The drum is in the hands of a person who knows how to play it.

Eli.—Speak lower, she's looking at us.

Bor.—(Turning toward Doresta's window.) Doresta, my sweetheart, may God preserve your beauty and gentle graces.

Doresta.—(At the window.) Were it not for the company, I should answer you in a way that would silence you for good.

Bor.—But why, my dear Doresta?

Dor.—Because you mock me. If you return, my answer shall displease you. Learn that, although homely, I do not envy even Phebe.

Bor.—You must not get vexed, my dear, if I repeat simply what everybody says that sees you.

Dor.—Do you wish me to speak frankly? Such as I am, beautiful or homely, I do not lack admirers.

Bor.—Would to God that, since I have seen you, I loved myself as I cherish you!

Dor.—That's very fine—but, go tell it to the marines.

Bor.—Try me, command me to the utmost of my ability; I wish to serve and to prove by obedience that my love equals my promises.

Dor.—Had you thought me a woman that would snap you up at once, you would not, perhaps, have made me such fine offers.

Bor.—If you will stop and think a moment, Miss, you will see you are treating me unjustly.

Dor.—How can you call such fair words and such a gracious reception injustice?

Bor.—Because I dare not speak my mind freely; certain of your responses make me sick at heart.

Dor.—'Tis truly a pity to make you suffer so; but, tell me, will you die of it?

Bor.—It would be nothing strange.

Dor.—Very well, my gallant fellow; those who dance must pay the fiddler.

Bor.—'Pon my word I'm quite willing to pay the fiddler, if I'm allowed to dance, but so far as I can see, dear Doresta, I'm paying much and dancing little, receiving much pain and giving none.

Dor.—How can you tell? Cannot one suffer without showing it, as you complain without suffering?

Bor.—Would to God my pains touched you!

Dor.—Would you have me make public those things best concealed for your good name and mine? I pray you, you who are so sensible, not to ask such folly.

Bor.—I do not wish to tire you longer, for I think I understand you, and I will owe you many thanks if you will kindly command me to come to you at an hour when you can open your door to me.

Dor.—Do not ask such a thing; I see no way to arrange it.

Bor.—This very night, if you choose, when the door is opened to Hymen you can open to me.

Dor.—By his life and Phebe's drive that from your head. My mistress exacts that he enter alone.

Bor.—But fix it up so that you can grant me this grace.

Eli.—Give her till to-morrow night. You're importunate.

Bor.—Will you consent, my sweetheart?

Dor.—Quite willingly, sir, so that I shall not contradict your friend. May the grace of God accompany you!

Bor.—May I, for my consolation, remain in yours!

Dor.—Be of good cheer, for God died for all.

Bor.—Good-bye, and may Heaven preserve you. (Doresta retires from the window.)

Eli.—I should never have believed, Boreas, that you had so skillful a touch in this difficult business if I had not seen with my own eyes how you wormed yourself into Doresta's favor.

Bor.—We had better leave, our master must expect us.

Eli.—We can chat as we go, for we've plenty of time.
(They leave.)

Enter Turpedio (Doresta reappears at the window).

Turpedio.—I would kiss the hands of the secret object of all my thoughts, the most beautiful Doresta.

Doresta.—You arrive seasonably, Señor Turpedio, but why to so small a saint so great an offering?

Tur.—You are so great a saint that most of those who see your charms and many graces believe you divinity itself. As to me—I do not dare to speak what I think.

Dor.—How charming! May Heaven bless you! Have you anything else to say?

Tur.—And you ask me this? Then you are my enemy, knowing how I wish to serve you.

Dor.—Have I done you any ill?

Tur.—You could do no greater.

Dor.—Very well, from to-day on I shall treat you without courtesy.

Tur.—In what way?

Dor.—By asking you to leave me alone.

Tur.—Ah! you're doubtless awaiting some little lover.

Dor.—Larger than you, in everything.

Tur.—I shouldn't be surprised; you merit the greatest gutter-snipe that ever tramped in mud.

Dor.—You're only a child.

Tur.—You'd find me man enough for you.

Dor.—Oh, leave me. I care nothing for your love.

Tur.—Abandon me and may God abandon you likewise!

Dor.—I swear I'll complain to the marquis and he'll probably tan your hide.

Tur.—Try it once and I'll give you so many bad days that you'll not lack evil years.

Dor.—What presumption in a little insolent rascal!

Tur.—I swear by Samson the strong, that I'll bring you evil days. I have something by my side to chastise your insults.

Dor.—You need not attack me, for I am not frightened by your menaces in the least; I have but to tell your master and

he will stripe your back with many blows—fit punishment for such a child.

Tur.—Would I could reach you, I'd slit your nose for that, you trollop, you demirep.

Dor.—That's what you need.

Tur.—I burst with rage. The devil!

DAY FOURTH.

SCENE—The following night, at the same place.

Enter Hymen, Boreas and Eliso.

Hymen.—Now, my brothers, you, Boreas, and you, Eliso, remember what I have just told you. I place myself in your hands; be sharp to watch while I am with Phebe.

Boreas.—Be tranquil, sir; you enter under favorable auspices, and we will die, if necessary, for your good name and ours.

Hym.—I rely upon you.

Eliso.—We desire it, sir.

Hym.—Is it time to call her?

Eli.—It's rather early; give the townsfolk time to fall asleep.

Bor.—On these occasions, sir, if too much time be given, repentance time arrives.

Hym.—Right you are. Come, knock, we'll go together and see.

Bor.—Sir, we must change our plans. Phebe wishes no one to enter with you.

Hym.—Then I go alone. (He enters house.)

Eli.—May God go with you!

Bor.—The devil goes with him, more likely.

Eli.—No, he crossed himself as he entered.

Bor.—Peace; good heavens! you spoil everything I arrange.

Eli.—I certainly spoiled nothing, brother.

Bor.—Then, when I wished to knock why did you, like a fool, say it's rather early. It's idiotic to await misfortune. Had we been surprised while he were here we were dead, or dishonored if we quit him, and to him, God alone knows what might have happened. Now, alone as we are, if we wish to flee, almost any falsehood will later answer. My advice is, save our skins.

Eli.—Well, say no more; he's entered.

Bor.—Say, what do you think?

Eli.—And you, speak out frankly, letting the dead past go and occupying ourselves only with the present.

Bor.—I'm so beside myself that I wish I'd never been born, rather than find myself in this scrape.

Eli.—Be quiet, brother, it's too early to complain.

Bor.—May an ill voyage await him that placed me in this danger and laid upon me these cares! Never a man of my kindred knew sword from buckler, but I, greatest fool of my line, come here with no wish to kill and much less desire to be killed myself.

Eli.—Well, you're a sensible fellow; we'll do as you say.

Bor.—We'll not await the combat, but leave at once, rather than have our throats cut here.

Eli.—And if he doesn't find us when he comes?

Bor.—I'll not lack for talk; leave it to me.

Eli.—Since there's remedy for all, let's stay awhile; should we hear anyone coming we'll put ground between us.

Bor.—It's easy to say, but if we cannot run fast enough?

Eli.—And why?

Bor.—Because I cannot. These weapons are quite heavy, and I dare not leave them. Besides, fear has short legs, and I can scarce move now.

Eli.—Very well, my brother Boreas, away with the arms, since to save the steel you may well lose your belt and skin. I warrant, the weapons gone, you'll run fast enough.

Bor.—Yes, but if I lose the arms my master will accuse me of cowardice. I'd rather throw myself in yonder stream than fail in fair excuse.

Eli.—If you cannot carry them, give them to me. Then you can flee and I'll render good account.

Bor.—But the mantle, what would he say should I lose it?

Eli.—For the mantle's loss you'll easily find excuses aplenty. You can say, if you wish, that, forced to wield the sword, you abandoned it, for fighting men, before they engage, are used to doff the mantle.

Bor.—Wait, I'll fold it up like this.

Enter the Marquis and Turpedio, each with sword in hand.

Turpedio.—Who goes there? (Boreas and Eliso flee for their lives.)

Marquis.—Kill them, kill them—where have they been?

Tur.—They passed this way, sir, but I have the mantle.

Marq.—By Death's head, I swear that if they had not escaped they should have been well chastised.

Tur.—Listen, sir. Here is, I think, something that will clear your doubts. 'Tis Boreas' mantle, Boreas, the servant of Hymen.

Marq.—Are you sure?

Tur.—Most certain, sir.

Marq.—How many were they?

Tur.—Two only; and by this mantle doubtless the two servants of that man.

Marq.—Then, by the Powers above, the traitor now must be within the house.

Tur.—If that be so, let's at him quick.

Marq.—Come here; first, we'd better think how we may get him.

Tur.—We'll knock at once, since we must enter.

Marq.—But he'll surely get away if he hears us.

Tur.—As you wish a quick and certain method to dispel these doubts and end this enterprise, we'll kick in the door and enter in a trice; nor need we fear to be perceived, since before we are barely heard we'll be upstairs, where we can strike first and hard.

Marq.—Come, let us on, we've tarried now too long; give me the mantle.

Tur.—Take this buckler.

Marq.—Give it here, I understand you well.

Tur.—We'll go with naked sword and let our motto be: No sooner said than done.

Marq.—If he comes within your reach, leave him with no need of doctor or surgeon.

Tur.—Enter quickly, I charge myself with all the rest. (They smash in the door and enter the house.)

DAY FIFTH.

SCENE—Room in the Marquis' house.

Enter Phebe, the Marquis and Turpedio.

Marquis.—(Pursuing Phebe.) Woman of evil life and traitoress, where are you going?

Turpedio.—Mercy! my lord, mercy!

Phebe.—Alas! alas! unfortunate being that I am!

Marq.—What means this conduct, madam? Think you it was to cover us with so great dishonor that we guarded you with utmost care? Confess to this page your sins, for, having soiled our ancient race, you must die. I save your life by killing you.

Phe.—You are my lord and brother. Cursed be the day that gave me birth! I'm in your hands, and demand death rather than life. I wish to die, since I was born in such an inauspicious hour. The tomb shall receive what Hymen has not yet possessed.

Marq.—(To Turpedio.) Did you wound him?

Tur.—No, his fleetness saved his life.

Phe.—My lord, after asking you to be as little cruel as you can while putting me to death, I beg you to accept my life but spare his; for if I knew that he must die I should forget my own woes and think alone of his.

Marq.—It behooves you to reconcile your soul with God.

Phe.—Seek not to torment me by increasing my fears, and permit me, in this my last discourse, at least to show pity. The heart finds solace in recounting its woes.

Marq.—Then tell me how your intrigue happened.

Phe.—I shall do so in order that you may know how it comes that I die at your hands rather than of love for him who merits it so well. (Calls Doresta.)

Enter Doresta.

Doresta.—I'm here, madam.

Phebe.—Come, you were a witness to my happiness, you shall be of my misfortune.

Turpedio.—My lord, she, too, is a traitoress.

Dor.—And you, the enemy of all that's good.

Marquis.—Let her speak.

Phe.—Yes, I shall tell how destiny has led me to this sad end, where I and my well beloved die one death. I die for this true lover, who by his tender passion became my precious, gentle and noble lord and master, whose merit is so great that life itself is well employed when lost for him. The sole regret of my sad youth is that I did not enjoy, while it was yet possible, the happiness so much desired. I shall die longing, my heart torn by the pangs of love. Would that I had listened to Hymen, I could then die without regret, and he could live with no just complaint. Perchance, he may curse me, since what he asked with so great insistence and I burned to give I refused always. Unfortunate being that I am, must I die thus!

Marq.—In the midst of all my cares would you have me believe you irreproachable, when I have seen what I wish I'd never seen for your own good and honor?

Phe.—Do as you will, my brother; with the help of God I'll not complain. My father—whom God has received in glory—left me subject to you, and since you will, ingloriously, to put me to the sword, strike, but listen. Grant me some moments of that life you are about to take. I do not care to live, even if you had not resolved to slay me, for it is folly to wish for

life without hope of happiness. Nor do I complain of death, as I was born mortal. I lament the death, which comes too late; had it come before I learned to know Hymen it would have been received with joy, but, seizing me in such a moment, where is the man or maid who would not mourn my fate? Never have I been a traitress; if I have killed anyone, I know not whom, nor do I know it if I've stolen. My love was just and right, because I loved my husband only, and virgins, when the love-time comes, should be willing to die for those who would die for them; such a death insures their deathless fame. Then come, O Death! whene'er you will; I wait with seeming joy, for such an end should make me happy though it must sadden others. May every mortal be distressed by my misfortune; may all animals give new signs of sorrow and birds lose their sweet song; may the earth tremble and the sea be stirred to its depths; in the darkened skies may the sun lose its brilliancy and the moon its silvery sheen; may the stones be covered with mourning, the brooks cease to flow and the trees prove sterile; may everything bear funereal signs of my unfortunate destiny!

Marq.—Be quiet, my sister; I am already saddened but too much by your approaching death, and it's an accursed necessity; if I am touched to pity and condone, your anguish must be more. Be prudent and remember that the tender-hearted surgeon effects no cures. If you fear death, recall that from our birth it hovers over all, and 'tis folly, I am told, to fear what cannot be avoided. I know not why you cherish this life so full of sorrow, when through death you may enter life where suffering cannot reach you. Here, in this sea of misery, where all are plunged, the old and the beardless, the poor with poverty, the rich with care, everyone with uncertainty as to the future, must we all be full of pain. Do not fear the voyage, but leave this cursed world to accomplish the noble end for which you were created. But, first, confess yourself.

Phe.—(On her knees.) I confess that since my birth I have committed no greater sin than being honest. I merit all my sorrows for having afflicted Hymen while I mortified myself. I confess that she sins grievously and deceives herself who refuses to profit by these beauties of an instant which the earth must consume; before God I accuse myself of this.

Marq.—This is not the confession that your soul requires; confess again.

Phe.—I demand, then, pardon of God if my love were not as keen as my lover's, for had it been as true and passionate I should not die, alas! like this.

Marq.—Your time has come. (He raises his sword.)

Enter Hymen, with his servants.

Hymen.—Stop, sir. (Holding the marquis' sword arm.)

Marquis.—(Tearing himself loose.) What do you say?
page.

Turpedio.—Yes, my lord.

Marq.—Come here by my side.

Tur.—(Sword in hand.) I'm here, sir.

Hym.—Do not let passion get the better of you, I pray. Calm yourself; believe me, that will prove of most advantage to all.

Marq.—But who are you, sir?

Hym.—He that desires most the honor and felicity of Phebe. My name is Hymen, and Phebe was and is my wife; we've mutually pledged our word upon it.

Marq.—Think, sir, if you are a knight, that it is presumption to believe you can obtain her forcibly.

Hym.—God does not wish it, nor do I, but with the courtesy that is your due. That justice alone may decide my pretensions, ask Phebe her will, and if she accepts me for husband, as I am already in the sight of God, it will be but just and right that you accept me. You know you will lose nothing by this alliance; as to race and other things you have little advantage over me, and this I say, for you, yourself, can testify to its truth.

Marq.—I know that you are equals and the marriage suitable, but you should certainly have conducted the negotiations in quite a different way.

Hym.—I know when to employ the third party; I take a wife for myself alone, and I wished to assure myself concerning her.

Marq.—And you, madam, what did you wish? You have not spoken nor told the relations that exist between you.

Phebe.—I say that since you must see what an ill road you've taken you had better bid us adieu.

Marq.—Why so?

Phe.—To give you leisure to reflect upon the design you had to kill me, for, without the troublesome interference of relatives, I married, and married well.

Marq.—Thank God for that mercy!

Phe.—Amen.

Hym.—I desire, madam, that the past be forgotten. While he wished, it is true, to kill you, he acted like an honorable man, and could not do otherwise without tarnish to his reputation.

Marq.—Let us speak of it no longer, as all has ended well. May it please the divine Messiah, my sister, that your days be long and your happiness great! You have married better than you thought.

Hym.—Then join our hands, and, if you wish, henceforth we shall be good brothers and conduct ourselves as such.

Marq.—(To Phebe.) Do you agree?

Phe.—I am delighted.

Marq.—(Taking a hand of each and placing one in the other.) Join hands.

Eliso.—God be praised!

Boreas.—(To Eliso.) Yes, thanks to God, we are relieved of our dishonor.

Marq.—What shall we do now?

Hym.—If you agree, we shall go to my home, where your reception will testify my joy; and there, too, we can set the marriage day.

Eli.—(Approaching.) Before you leave, we offer ourselves, Boreas and I, to Madam Phebe, as devoted servants.

Phe.—I accept you as brothers.

Bor.—We kiss your feet and hands.

Eli.—We offer, also, to the marquis our desire to serve, and ask his pardon for the past.

Tur.—To the Señor Hymen I offer myself as faithful valet.

Phe.—To complete the merry-making that shall crown our pains, let us marry Doresta, my maid, to one of these young fellows.

Marq.—To which?

Phe.—To the most gallant.

Hym.—Each believes himself to be the man.

Phe.—They are certainly all good fellows.

Marq.—Well, how can we arrange it?

Phe.—Let Doresta choose, for I think she loves Boreas or Turpedio.

Tur.—As to me, I ask nothing of her.

Doresta.—May Heaven confound you!

Tur.—By Heaven, I swear I——

Marq.—Peace, you rascally fool.

Phe.—No more of this. (To Doresta.) Take the one you wish.

Hym.—I charge myself, my lady, to marry Doresta according to her taste, if she confides in me. But we must drop it for the moment and hasten away, as it is not fitting that the sun should surprise us here.

Marq.—Good-bye, then.

Hym.—If you love us, come and see my mansion; we'll divert ourselves with song as we go.

Marq.—For love of you I go willingly, if my sister, your bride, accompanies us.

Phe.—With pleasure.

Hym.—On our way, sir; now, let us sing.

Marq.—What shall it be?

Hym.—The triumph that swells my heart, the passion that has conquered all obstacles.

Marq.—Sing victory, victory, conquerors, sing victory in love. (As they leave, all strike up an amatory chorus.)

The *Hymen* of Naharro is, perhaps, the best specimen of old Spanish comedy—as it existed before the time of Lopé de Vega—with the single exception of *Celestina*. It forms one of a series of eight comedias—a term applied by the Spaniards to any kind of drama—published in 1517, as what he terms “the chief among the firstlings of his genius.” He claimed some knowledge of the ancient drama, divided his plays into jornadas, or days, to correspond to acts, and opened them with a prologue. Various in subject and sometimes odd in form, his plays were so gross as well as audacious in tone that they were soon prohibited by the Inquisition.

THE SEVENTH FARCE

(PASO SEPTIMO)

OF

LOPÉ DE RUEDA.

(*Translated by W. H. H. Chambers.*)

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

TORUVIO, a Peasant.

AGUEDA DE TORUEGANO, his Wife.

MENCIGUELA, his Daughter.

ALOJA, a Neighbor.

SCENE—ZAMORA.

The Seventh Farce.

PRELUDE.

The argument of the *Paso Septimo*, as usual with the farces of Lopé de Rueda, is of the slightest, turning merely on a family dispute as to the sale of olives, the first tree for which has only just been planted. From the future proceeds vast returns are expected; but the father would sell them at a moderate price, while his wife would demand one that seems extravagant. The daughter receives a beating from her mother for taking her father's part, and the quarrel is settled by the kindly intervention of a neighbor.

Enters Toruvio.

Toruvio.—God defend me! but what a storm broke upon me in the mountain yonder! It seemed as though the bottom had dropped clean out of the sky and let whole clouds fall on my head. I'll bet, too, my wife hasn't supper ready. May rabies kill her! (He calls loudly.) Hallo there! my daughter Menciguela! Everybody must be asleep in Zamora. (He knocks.) Agueda de Toruegano, don't you hear me?

Enters Menciguela.

Menciguela.—Mercy! father, must you smash in our door?

Tor.—What a fuss you make! how you chatter! and where is your mother, miss?

Men.—She's gone to a neighbor's house, to help her sew.

Tor.—Devil take the sewing, her and you. Go and call her.

Enters Agueda.

Agueda.—Now then, my fine fellow, I'm here. Since you've returned home with such a mean little bundle of fagots, I suppose there'll be no living with you.

Tor.—What! to you, playing the fine lady, it seems a mean little bundle of fagots! Yet I swear by all that is most holy that I and your foster-son together were not able to get it on my back.

Agu.—Indeed, evil be the hour—but how wet you are!

Tor.—I've just had a little soup—of water. Wife, as you value your life, give me something to eat.

Agu.—What the deuce can I give you, when I have nothing?

Men.—Mercy! father, but this wood is soaked.

Tor.—Yes, it's soaked, yet your mother will say it's only with dew.

Agu.—Run, my daughter, and cook a couple of eggs for your father's supper, then make his bed at once. (*Menciguela* leaves.) Now, I feel certain, husband, that you didn't remember to set out that olive-tree shoot that I asked you to plant.

Tor.—What else detained me then, but planting it?

Agu.—Now, be quiet, husband—but where did you plant it?

Tor.—Yonder near the black fig-tree. Down there, you remember—where I gave you a kiss.

Enters Menciguela.

Men.—Father, you may come to supper now; everything's ready.

Agu.—Husband, you don't know what I've been thinking. That olive-tree shoot that you planted to-day, six or seven years from now will bear four or five large measures of olives, and by sticking in a shoot here and a shoot there, in twenty-five or thirty years we'll have olives to burn.

Tor.—That's true, wife; and won't that be fine!

Agu.—Now, look here, husband; do you know what I've been thinking? I'll gather the olives, you load them on our ass and take them to market, and Menciguela shall sell them in the plaza. (Turning to Menciguela.) But see here, my daughter, I forbid you to sell them for less than two Castilian reals the small measure.

Tor.—What! two Castilian reals? Don't you see what a burden that will be on our conscience; how it will prick us every day? Fourteen or fifteen dineros the small measure is quite enough to ask.

Agu.—Silence, I tell you; the tree is of the very finest variety. Why, it's from Cordova.

Tor.—Well, even if it is from Cordova, my price is enough to ask.

Agu.—Now, don't split my head open. (Turning to her daughter.) See here, my daughter, again I command you not to sell them for less than two Castilian reals the small measure.

Tor.—What! two Castilian reals! (Turning to his daughter.) Come here, Menciguela; how much must you ask the small measure?

Men.—Whatever you desire, father.

Tor.—Fourteen or fifteen dineros.

Men.—So much shall I ask, father.

Agu.—What! so much shall I ask, father! Come here my daughter; how much must you ask?

Men.—Whatever you command, mother.

Agu.—Two Castilian reals.

Tor.—What! two Castilian reals! I promise you that if you do not do as I command, I shall give you more than two hundred lashes. How much must you ask?

Men.—As much as you told me, father.

Tor.—Fourteen or fifteen dineros.

Men.—I shall do so, father.

Agu.—What! I shall do so, father! (Beating her.) Take this, and that—you shall do as I command.

Tor.—Let her alone.

Men.—Oh! mother, you are killing me!

Enters Aloja.

Aloja.—What does this mean, neighbors? Why are you beating the girl?

Agu.—Alas! sir, this rascally fellow wishes to sell things under price; wishes to ruin my family; some olives that are as large as walnuts.

Tor.—And I swear by the bones of my forefathers that they are not even as large as pineapple seeds.

Agu.—Yes, they are.

Tor.—No, they're not.

Alo.—Now, madam, my neighbor, you'll kindly do me the favor to go inside, and I'll try to straighten things out.

Agu.—Straighten it out or muddle it up! (She leaves.)

Alo.—Now, señor neighbor, what about these olives? Bring them out here and I will buy them, even if you have twenty large measures.

Tor.—But, señor, they're not the kind of olives you think them; they're not olives we've got in the house, they're olives we've got in prospect.

Alo.—Well, bring them out anyway; I'll buy them all at a just price.

Men.—Two reals the small measure, mother says she must have.

Alo.—That's very dear.

Tor.—Doesn't it seem so to your honor?

Men.—And my father, fifteen dineros.

Alo.—I want to see a sample.

Tor.—God defend me! Señor, your honor does not wish to understand me. To-day I planted the shoot of an olive-tree; my wife said that six or seven years from now it will bear four or five large measures of olives; that she will gather them, I take them to market, and our daughter sell them. Now, in spite of all that's just, she asks two reals the small measure. I say my daughter shall not ask so much; my wife says she shall; this caused the strife.

Alo.—Oh! so diverting a strife has never before been seen!

The olive-trees are not planted, and yet they have already laid a burden upon the back of the girl.

Men.—Doesn't it seem so, sir?

Tor.—Don't cry, my dear. That girl, señor, is as good as gold. Now go, my daughter, and set the table. I promise to buy you a frock with the proceeds of the first olives sold.

Alo.—Now you go also, neighbor, and make peace with your wife.

Tor.—Good-by, señor. (He leaves with his daughter.)

Alo.—What strange things we see in life! Yes, we certainly do. The olives not planted, yet they have caused quarrels!

THE DOG IN THE MANGER

(EL PERRO DEL HORTELANO)

OF

LOPE DE VEGA.

(Translated by W. H. H. Chambers.)

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DIANA, COUNTESS DE BELFLOR.

THEODORE, *her Secretary.*

OCTAVIO, *her Squire.*

FABIO, *a Servant.*

MARCELA, }
DOROTEA, } *Maids.*
ANARDA, }

TRISTAN, *Theodore's Servant*

MARQUIS RICARDO.

CELIO, *his Servant.*

COUNT FREDERIC.

LEONIDO, *his Servant.*

COUNT LUDOVICO.

CAMILO, *his Servant.*

FURIO, }
LIRANO, } *Lackeys.*
ANTONELO, }

SCENE—NAPLES.

The Dog in the Manger.

As in other Spanish plays, the acts are indicated by days.

ARGUMENT.

Day First.—Diana, countess de Belflor, catches sight of a fleeing man, one night, in her apartments. In response to her loud cries the servants arrive; one by one she puts them to the question and finally discovers that Marcela has had a secret meeting at night with Theodore, the secretary. In the morning Diana calls her secretary and, pretending to have been asked by a friend, a woman of rank who loves a servant, to write a letter, asks Theodore to correct it and frame a reply. Theodore admits he can live without Marcela and blesses his great good fortune in winning the love of the countess.

Day Second.—Diana learns that Theodore has broken with Marcela, and smilingly informs him that she has decided to marry either Count Frederic or the Marquis Ricardo, and asks his advice as to which one she had better choose. Theodore, dumbfounded, stammers a reply and runs to renew his former relations with Marcela, whereupon Diana dictates to him a letter,

which, although it plainly tells him he is a fool, renews his hopes. He breaks again with Marcela, tells the countess he loves her and is calmly told that it is the duty of a servant to love his mistress. He now accuses her of being the dog in the manger, threatens to marry Marcela, is given some slaps in the face, and in return for his blood-stained handkerchief, which Diana wants, receives two thousand crowns.

Day Third.—The marquis and count decide that Theodore is too high in the favor of the countess, and make arrangements to have him assassinated. Happily, Theodore's servant, Tristan, is selected as the bravo to do the deed. Theodore, fearing for his life, resolves to go to Spain, whereupon Diana concludes that in spite of his lowly birth she will marry him. Tristan, however, with ready wit, provides him a noble father and the comedy ends amid general rejoicings, in which even the marquis and the count take a share.

DAY I.

SCENE I.

A room in the apartments of the countess Diana. Night.

Enter Theodore, in an embroidered mantle, and Tristan, his valet, running.

Theodore.—Let us flee, Tristan, this way.

Tristan.—How disgraceful!

Theo.—Did anyone recognize us?

Tris.—I don't know; I presume so. (They leave.)

Enter Diana.

Diana.—Ah! stop, stop, sir. Listen—is this the way to treat me? Stop, I say—hallo! is there no servant here? No

one? Was it a man I saw, or did a dream delude me? Hallo there! is everyone asleep?

Enter Fabio.

Fabio.—Did your ladyship call?

Diana.—(Aside.) In my present excitement his calmness maddens me. (Aloud.) Run, you fool, for you merit this name; run and see who the man is that has just left this room.

Fab.—This room?

Dia.—Run, and answer only with your feet.

Fab.—I follow him.

Dia.—Learn surely who he is.

Fab.—What treason! what iniquity! (He leaves.)

Enter Octavio.

Octavio.—Although I heard your voice, I could scarcely credit that it was your ladyship calling at such an unusual hour.

Diana.—You make a very pretty shooting star—you travel so rapidly! You retire early and, when men enter my apartments, indeed, almost my bed-chamber itself, you come at leisure when I in desperation call. Is this the action of a faithful squire?

Oct.—I could not believe it was your ladyship calling.

Dia.—Let us imagine it was some one else. Go, retire again lest harm befall you.

Enter Fabio.

Octavio.—But, Señora—

Fabio.—I never saw the like; he flew like a falcon.

Diana.—Did you note nothing?

Fab.—What?

Dia.—A mantle embroidered with gold that he wore?

Fab.—As he was descending the stairs I——

Dia.—The men of my household are worthy only of serving old women!

Fab.—He extinguished the lamp with his hat; descended in the favoring darkness of the doorway, drew his sword—and disappeared.

Dia.—You're a wet hen.

Fab.—What should I have done?

Dia.—A fine question! caught him and killed him.

Fab.—But suppose he were a gentleman; do you think it wise of me to throw your reputation into the public street?

Dia.—A gentleman here? What do you mean?

Oct.—Is there no one in Naples who loves you? who would marry you, and, meanwhile, would use every means to see you? Are there not a thousand gentlemen whom a desire to marry you has blinded with love? besides, you say he had a gallant's mantle, and Fabio saw him throw his hat at the light.

Dia.—Doubtless it was a cavalier who, out of love, sought to corrupt my servants. Such honorable servants I have, Octavio! But I must learn who it was. His hat was adorned with feathers; it must be still on the stairs. Go get it.

Fab.—Do you think I can find it?

Dia.—It is clear, you imbecile, that flying he dare not stop to seek it.

Fab.—I'll take a light, Señora, and see. (He leaves.)

Dia.—If I verify my suspicions, not a servant shall remain in my household.

Oct.—You will do well, since they have dared to trouble your tranquility. But, although perhaps indiscreet to speak to you upon a displeasing subject, especially when you are justly irritated, I must say your unwillingness to marry is the cause of all the folly shown by those who wish to win you.

Dia.—You know something?

Oct.—I know only that you have a reputation for beauty and unwillingness to marry. The thoughts of many are fixed upon the Count de Belflor.

Enter Fabio.

Fabio.—I ran across this hat: it would be hard to find a worse.

Diana.—That is the hat you found?

Octavio.—I never saw a filthier.

Fab.—Well, this is it.

Dia.—You're sure this is the hat?

Fab.—Do you think I would deceive you?

Dia.—Fine feathers, these!

Fab.—Belonging to some thief.

Oct.—Doubtless he came to rob.

Dia.—You'll drive me crazy, you two.

Fab.—Nevertheless, this is the hat.

Dia.—But I tell you I saw feathers, waving plumes—and they resolve into this?

Fab.—As he threw them on the lamp, they doubtless burned. Icarus, flying too near the sun, burned his feathers and fell into the white foam of the sea. 'Tis the same tale. Icarus—that's the hat; the sun—that's the lamp; and the sea—that's the stairs where they fell.

Dia.—I'm in no joking mood, Fabio; this requires serious thought.

Oct.—There will be time to learn the truth.

Dia.—What time, Octavio?

Oct.—Sleep now, and to-morrow we can ascertain—

Dia.—I cannot sleep—I am Diana, and I swear I will not rest until I learn the truth. Call all my women. (Fabio leaves.)

Oct.—What a miserable night we shall pass!

Dia.—Occupied by care could I sleep? Could I forget that a man has been within the house this very night?

Oct.—It would be wise to inform ourselves cautiously; to make secret researches.

Dia.—You are too prudent, Octavio. To sleep after such an adventure would be an excess of discretion.

Enter Fabio, with Dorotea, Marcela and Anarda.

Fabio.—I have brought only those who may be able to enlighten you; the other women of the household are wrapt in slumber. The maids of your chamber alone could have heard anything.

Anarda.—(Aside.) This night the sea will run high and its waves rage! (Aloud.) Do you wish to be alone with us?

Diana.—Yes. (To Fabio and Octavio.) You two go.

Fab.—(To Octavio.) Inviting examination!

Octavio.—(To Fabio.) She's crazy.

Fab.—(To Octavio.) And suspects me! (Both leave.)

Dia.—Dorotea, come here.

Dorotea.—What does your ladyship wish?

Dia.—I wish to know the names of the men who usually roam about this street.

Dor.—Señora, the Marquis Ricardo, and occasionally Count Paris.

Dia.—Answer with entire truthfulness the question I shall now ask.

Dor.—What have I to conceal?

Dia.—With whom have you seen them talking?

Dor.—Were you to call on me a thousand times I could give but one answer: I have seen them speak with none of this house, but you; you only, Señora.

Dia.—Has no message been given you? Has no page entered?

Dor.—Never.

Dia.—Retire to yonder corner.

Marcela.—(To Anarda.) Pleasant inquisition!

Anarda.—(To Marcela.) Most severe.

Dia.—Listen, Anarda; who is the man that left the house awhile ago?

Ana.—The man?

Dia.—Yes, the man who left this room. Come, I know your tricks. Who brought him here to see me? In whom did he confide?

Ana.—Do not believe that any of us would be so bold. No one would dare to introduce a man into your apartments. No one is capable of such treason. No, Señora, you must not think this.

Dia.—Listen. Let us go farther away. If you are not deceiving me, then I have reason to suspect it was to meet one of my maids that the man entered.

Ana.—Seeing you, Señora, so justly agitated forces me to frank speech, though by so doing I am false to the friendship I owe my friend Marcela; she loves a man who returns her love, but I've not been able to discover who he is.

Dia.—It is an error to conceal anything; you have told me the greater part, why refuse the rest?

Ana.—I am a woman; therefore, as you know, am tormented by the secrets of others. But let it suffice you to learn that he came for Marcela. You need not fear for the honor of your house; he comes only to talk, and has been coming but a short time.

Dia.—What impudence! a fine reputation I, an unmarried woman, will have! Men entering my house at night! For the count, my late husband's memory—infamous——

Ana.—Be calm and let me explain. The man who comes to talk with Marcela is not a stranger in your house, and he can come without danger to your reputation.

Dia.—Then it is one of my servants?

Ana.—Yes, Señora.

Dia.—Which one?

Ana.—Theodore.

Dia.—The secretary!

Ana.—I know only they have spoken; further I know nothing.

Dia.—Leave me.

Ana.—Use your best judgment. Don't be rash.

Dia.—I am more tranquil, now that I know he did not come for me. (She calls Marcela.)

Mar.—What do you wish Señora? (Aside.) I tremble already.

Dia.—Have I not confided to you my honor and my inmost thoughts?

Mar.—What have they said of me that could make you question my well-known loyalty?

Dia.—Your loyalty?

Mar.—How have I offended?

Dia.—Is it not an offense to allow a man to enter my house, my very apartments, at night, to speak with you?

Mar.—It is Theodore, who is love-stricken, and whenever he sees me, says sweet things by the score.

Dia.—Sweet things by the score. Upon my faith, 'tis a year of most excellent harvest! You should thank high heaven!

Mar.—I mean, as soon as he sees me, his tongue at once translates the language of his heart.

Dia.—Translates? 'Tis a strange expression; but what does he say?

Mar.—'Tis difficult to remember.

Dia.—You can if you try.

Mar.—Once he said: "For those bright eyes I'd sell my soul;" another time: "By those eyes I live;" and again: "Desire, awakened by your beauty, robbed me of sleep." Afterward he asked for a single hair with which to enchain his longing. But why should I repeat these trifles?

Dia.—At least, these trifles pleased you well?

Mar.—I own it, since I have reason to believe that Theodore's intentions are honorable—that he wishes to marry me.

Dia.—Doubtless. Love is quite proper when its end and aim is marriage; do you wish me to arrange for yours?

Mar.—Ah! how happy you make me. As you have shown me so much mercy and have been so generous, I will frankly confess: I adore him. There is none other in all the city so able and so prudent, so loving and at the same time so discreet.

Dia.—I already know his merits by reason of the office that he fills.

Mar.—There is a wide difference, however, Señora, between a knowledge of his merits, based on the cold cere-

monious work he does for you and that born of familiar intercourse—the tenderness, sweetness and vivacity of his amorous discourse.

Dia.—Marcela, I have resolved to marry you, when the proper time arrives, but I owe something to myself and the name I bear. I cannot permit these conversations to continue, and I must appear to punish you, since your companions know you have been meeting Theodore in my house. Be discreet, and when occasion offers, I will serve you. Theodore has been raised in my house, and for you, Marcela, I have the feelings of a relative rather than a mistress; be assured I shall not forget your good services.

Mar.—Your creature casts herself at your feet.

Dia.—You may go now.

Mar.—My gratitude will be eternal.

Dia.—I wish to be alone; go.

Ana.—(To Marcela.) What happened?

Mar.—(To Anarda.) Her cares have become my happiness.

Ana.—Has she already learned your secret?

Mar.—Yes, and knows, too, that it is one pure and stainless. (They both bow three times, then leave.)

Dia.—(Alone.) A thousand times I have noted the beauty, grace and cleverness of Theodore; were it not for the distance birth has placed between us, I should love him. Love is our common nature; but I regard my honor as a treasure of greater value than love. I respect my rank, and even to think of such a love degrades me. Envy will remain, for if anyone can justly envy the happiness of another, I can. I would that Theodore could raise himself to me or that I could lower myself to him!

SCENE II.

The same room in the apartments of the countess. The next morning.

Enter Theodore and Tristan.

Theodore.—I have not been able to rest a single moment.

Tristan.—You have good cause for wakefulness, for you are lost if identified. I advised you to retire, but you would not listen.

Theo.—Who can resist love?

Tris.—You shoot well, but only glance at the target.

Theo.—'Tis the way all clever marksmen do.

Tris.—You would succeed better had you a proper appreciation of danger.

Theo.—Do you think the countess recognized me?

Tris.—Yes and no; she may not have actually recognized, but she certainly suspects you.

Theo.—When Fabio followed me down stairs I was at the point of killing him.

Tris.—How dexterously I extinguished the light with my hat.

Theo.—Darkness stopped him just in time, for had he wished to come nearer I should have known how to stop him.

Tris.—While descending, I said to the lamp: We are strangers to this house. The lamp made answer: You lie. To revenge the insult, I threw my hat in his face.

Theo.—To-day I look for death as my portion.

Tris.—You lovers are always sighing and complaining.

Theo.—What can I do in this great peril, Tristan?

Tris.—Cease to love Marcela, for the countess is not a woman that will permit amours in her house.

Theo.—And how can I forget her? 'Tis impossible.

Tris.—I'll teach you how to choke your love.

Theo.—Now shall I hear folly!

Tris.—Skill conquers all, and my art is easy. In the first place, you must firmly resolve to forget your love and that you will not return to her even in thought. If a spark of hope remains, you cannot forget her cherished image. Be firmly resolved and imagination's play will stop at once. Have you not noted that when the spring run down, the watch wheels cease to move? 'Tis so with love when the spring of hope becomes inactive.

Theo.—And will not memory constantly renew my sorrow, by recalling the charms of which I am deprived?

Tris.—It is an enemy from which it is difficult to separate; but imagination can aid us to conquer.

Theo.—In what way?

Tris.—By thinking constantly of the defects and not at all on the graces of your mistress. Love is born by thinking of charms and being blind to imperfections. Do not let your fancy paint her in rich robes, brilliant on a balcony. Remember the words of a sage: "Their beauty is half dress-maker." Imagine her body to be that of a penitent scourged for her sins, rather than one to be draped in rich fabrics. Remember her defects, 'tis the sovereign remedy. At table you need but to recall some disgusting spectacle and, behold! your appetite is gone. Have ever present to your mind Marcela's defects, and if she returns to your thought memory will destroy love.

Theo.—What an ignoble surgeon! 'Tis the plan of a cloddish charlatan; you have not studied, Tristan, therefore you do not understand women. They are as clear and transparent as crystal.

Tris.—As crystal, yes—and as fragile; for you have hit an exact comparison. I know, however, another method, one that succeeded well with me. Even I was once in love; in love with a bundle of falsehoods, fifty years old, with so large a bay-window that all the papers of a sheriff's office might have been kept therein. Indeed, the Greeks would have been more at ease in it than within the Trojan horse. Have you never heard of that huge nut tree, whose hollow trunk gave shelter to an entire family? This corpulence could have sheltered them likewise. I wished to forget her, but my perfidious memory constantly recalled the orange flower, the lily, the jasmine and the snow. However, I hit upon a clever trick, and, like a man of sense, began to think of clothes-baskets, old trunks, huge rag-bags and hogsheads of swill; then was my love turned to disdain, and of my mistress, huge as she was, not a vestige remained.

Theo.—But Marcela has no defects and I cannot forget her.

Tris.—Then curse your luck and follow the foolish enterprise.

Theo.—But she is all charm, what can I do?

Tris.—Think of her charms until you lose the favor of the countess altogether.

Enter the countess.

Diana.—Theodore.

Theodore.—(Aside.) It is she!

Tristan.—(Aside.) If she learns the truth there'll be three of us bounced at once.

Dia.—Theodore, one of my friends, mistrusting her own skill, has asked me to write this letter. Forced by friendship to oblige, and being but little acquainted with the phrases of love, I bring it to you for correction. Theodore, take it and read.

Theo.—If you composed it, Señora, I should try in vain to equal it. It would be arrogance in me to pretend to correct it. Send it as it is.

Dia.—Read it, read it, I say.

Theo.—I am surprised at your lack of confidence in yourself; but I will read it to learn a diction with which I am entirely unacquainted—that of love.

Dia.—Entirely unacquainted with love?

Theo.—A knowledge of my defects has restrained me; I have no confidence.

Dia.—So I see; and this is why you go about concealed in a mantle?

Theo.—I, Señora? when? where?

Dia.—My steward told me that, chancing to go out last night, he met you wrapt in a mantle.

Theo.—'Twas but a pleasantry. Fabio and I oft play a thousand tricks.

Dia.—Read, read.

Theo.—I thought perchance some envious one had spoken.

Dia.—Perhaps you have given cause for jealousy; but read.

Theo.—Yes, I wish to see this miracle of ingenuity. (He reads:;) “To love because one sees others loving is envy: and before one loves, to be jealous is a marvelous invention of love which has been held impossible. My love is caused by jealousy. I am sad because, being the more beautiful, I cannot obtain the felicity I envy in another. Without a motive I am suspicious and jealous without love, although I feel I ought to love, since I wish to be loved. I neither consent nor refuse. I wish to remain silent, yet to be understood. Let him understand who may, I understand myself.”

Dia.—What do you think of it?

Theo.—If such be the lady's thought, it could not be more beautifully expressed. But I confess that I do not understand how love is caused by jealousy, since jealousy usually is born of love.

Dia.—I have reason to suspect that my friend has seen this young man with pleasure, but without love. Upon learning, however, that he is paying his addresses to another, jealousy has awakened love. May it not be so?

Theo.—Without a doubt, Señora; but this jealousy had a cause, and this cause, was it not love?

Dia.—I do not know, Theodore; the lady told me only that she had never felt for the cavalier aught but kindness until she learned he loved another; since then a thousand indiscreet desires have forced her to lay bare her soul and to renounce the indifference in which she had hoped to live.

Theo.—Your letter is charming, I could not hope to equal it.

Dia.—Enter my apartment and frame an answer.

Theo.—I dare not even try.

Dia.—Do this for my sake.

Theo.—Your ladyship wishes to test my ignorance.

Dia.—I shall await you here; return as quickly as you can.

Theo.—I leave to execute your commands. (He leaves.)

Dia.—Approach, Tristan, and listen.

Tris.—I hasten at your command, but I cannot come in these breeches without a feeling of shame. My master, your

secretary, is a trifle short of cash these days. I have told him in vain that the handsome habits of his valet ought to be his richest ornament—a mirror wherein to see his greatness. Though doubtless he is unable to do more.

Dia.—Does he gamble?

Tris.—Would to heaven! He that games can always get money, here or there. Formerly kings learned a trade, so that if perchance they lost their states they could still live. More happy he who in his tender youth has learned to game. 'Tis a noble art, for it sustains with little labor. A skillful artist will paint his genius into a canvas, which a fool may value at less than ten dollars, while a gambler has but to say, "even," to gain a hundred per cent.

Dia.—In brief, he does not play?

Tris.—He is too prudent.

Dia.—Then 'tis certain he has love affairs.

Tris.—Love affairs? What a joke! why, he's as cool as ice.

Dia.—An amiable young bachelor, well formed and courteous, and yet he courts no one?

Tris.—I look after his horse and clothes, but I do not stick my nose into his love letters or his amours. All day he is employed in your service and I suspect entirely occupied.

Dia.—But at night, does he never go out?

Tris.—I am not with him, my hip is bruised——

Dia.—How did that happen?

Tris.—I can answer as the badly married, when they say the scars of their face are due to jealousy. I fell on the stairs.

Dia.—You fell on the stairs?

Tris.—Yes, I fell and rolled from top to bottom; my ribs counted each step.

Dia.—It must have been your fault, Tristan, if you threw your hat at the lamp.

Tris.—(Aside.) Oh, the devil! She knows all.

Dia.—Why do you not answer?

Tris.—I sought to recall when—Oh, yes, now I remember, it was last night. There were some bats flying about; I chased

them with my hat and struck at one, when out went the lamp; then I lost my footing and rolled to the foot of the stairs.

Dia.—'Tis nicely told, but listen; in a book of secrets I remember to have read that the blood of bats is used to remove hair; I must have these bats bled to uncover this hair-breadth escape.

Tris.—(Aside.) It bids fair to be a serious scrape. Must I go to the galleys for some bats? (He leaves.)

Dia.—How anxious I have become!

Enter Theodore.

Theodore.—Your orders are executed, Señora.

Diana.—You have completed it?

Theo.—With little confidence, but it was your will and I have obeyed. Read it, Señora.

Dia.—(Reading.) "To love because one sees others love would only be envy, if love did not preëxist; for she who had never thought of love would not love simply because she had seen others love. Love which sees the one longed for in another's power declares itself; for as color mounts to the face in the loved one's presence, so does the tongue betray that which moves the soul. I say no more, and forswear happiness, because if I should err my lowliness would offend her greatness. I speak solely of what I understand, and I will not understand that which I do not merit for fear others should falsely believe that I believe I merit it."

Dia.—You've kept well within the bounds of decorum.

Theo.—You are ridiculing me.

Dia.—Heaven forbid!

Theo.—What do you really think of it?

Dia.—Of the two, yours excels, Theodore.

Theo.—I ought to regret it, for it is dangerous for an inferior to excel. A tale is told that one day a king said to his favorite: I am not content with this message I have just composed; write me another, then will I choose between them. The favorite did so, and his was chosen; as soon as he saw the

king's preference he returned home quickly and said to the eldest of his three sons: Let us fly from this kingdom immediately, for I am in dire peril. The son, in consternation, asked the cause. The king, responded the father, has discovered that I know more than he. Oh, that this letter has not done like for me!

Dia.—No, Theodore, if I prefer your letter 'tis because it so happily follows the idea I suggested; nor think because I highly esteem your pen I have lost all faith in mine, even though I am a woman, liable to err and not very discreet, as I fear I have just but too well shown. You say you fear your lowliness will offend her greatness; you are deceived, for when one truly loves this never happens; however unequal the rank, love never offends. This is reserved for hatred or indifference.

Theo.—So nature teaches; yet we learn that Phaeton, driving the golden horses, was cast on rugged rocks, and Icarus, with waxen wings, was precipitated into the crystal sea, both because they dared approach the sun.

Dia.—But the sun would have done nothing of the sort had it been a woman. If you are ever tempted to love one highly born, be confident, for love is greater than rank and women are not stone. I take your letter, I wish to review it at my leisure.

Theo.—Pardon, it has a thousand faults.

Dia.—I do not find even one.

Theo.—You wish to reward me. I have your letter.

Dia.—You may keep it, or better still, destroy.

Theo.—Destroy it?

Dia.—Yes, what matters such trifling loss when there is risk of one so great. (She leaves.)

Theo.—(Alone.) She leaves. Who would ever have believed that so wise and so noble a woman would have condescended to make known her love so brusquely? But perhaps I deceive myself—yet she said: "What matters such trifling loss when there is risk of one so great." So great? so great a loss? yes; doubtless, if she meant herself—but why should I disturb myself? 'Tis pleasantry alone, perchance. But no, the countess is so sensible, so wise. Such pleasantry

is not in keeping with her character. The greatest lords in Naples pay her court, and I, more than her slave, would be in peril of my life. Perhaps she has learned I woo Marcela; on this she chaffs me. Could mockery, though, paint her cheeks so deep a hue and make her tremble as she spoke? As the rose colors and opens to the touch of the sun, so, animated by the warmth of love, she colored a more brilliant tone and opened her heart to me. It cannot be an illusion or mere banter. Stop, insensate heart, you seek greatness! . . . but no, it is her beauty that attracts . . . and yet she is as discreet as she is beautiful. . . .

Enter Marcela.

Marcela.—Dare we chat awhile?

Theodore.—Yes, let us embrace the opportunity, however dangerous; for you, my dear Marcela, I would willingly die.

Mar.—To see you I would expose myself to a thousand deaths. I have awaited day with an impatience equal to that of a dove alone on her nest, and when I saw Aurora announce the rising sun I said: Now shall I see the sun of my life, nay, my life itself. Many things have happened since we parted. The countess swore she would not rest until she had identified the intruder, while false friends, envious of my happiness, treacherously told her of our love; for there is no true friendship among women serving one household. In brief, she has run down our secret, the huntress Diana; but I can assure you that all is well. I told her your intentions were honorable, that you wished to marry me; indeed, I did more, I confessed I adored you. I told her your good qualities, your cleverness, your wit, painted you in such glowing colors that I moved her heart in your favor to such an extent that she has promised soon to marry us. I feared she would be angry and drive us both from the house, but she is as generous as she is illustrious, and her clear mind has recognized your merits. Happy, indeed, are those who serve a kind mistress!

Theo.—She promised, you say, to marry us?

Mar.—Are you surprised that she favors one so near to her?

Theo.—(Aside.) I was deceived. Fool that I was, I thought the countess spoke of me. Thought that so noble a falcon would seek such unworthy prey.

Mar.—What are you mumbling?

Theo.—Marcela, the countess spoke with me, but she did not give me to understand that she knew it was I that ran from her apartments.

Mar.—She thoughtfully concealed it, in order not to be obliged to punish us in any way but by marriage, for 'tis the sweetest punishment that could be given those that love.

Theo.—Say, rather, that it is an honorable remedy.

Mar.—And you consent?

Theo.—With happiness and joy.

Mar.—Prove it to me.

Theo.—With my arms; the best signature to a love contract is a tender embrace. (They embrace.)

Enter Diana.

Diana.—I see you are mending rapidly! I should be quite content, for those who reprimand, love quick improvement; I beg you don't disturb yourself; go right on!

Theodore.—Señora, I was just telling Marcela the chagrin I felt as I left your apartments last night, for fear you might think my project to marry her an offense to you. This thought nearly killed me; but Marcela assures me that in uniting us you aim to show your bounty and greatness of soul. For this answer I embrace her, and believe me, Señora, if I wished to deceive you, my imagination would not fail. I recognize, Señora, that to one as discerning as yourself it is best to speak truth.

Dia.—Theodore, you have failed to pay due respect to the honor of my house, and you merit punishment, for the generosity I have shown you both did not justify such license. When love passes certain bounds it ceases to be a valid excuse. Until your marriage, for decorum's sake, I must keep Marcela under lock and key. I cannot run the risk of your being seen

together by the other servants, who might follow your example and place me under obligations to marry all. (She calls Dorotea.) Hallo! Doretea.

Enter Dorotea.

Dorotea.—What is your wish, Señora?

Diana.—Take this key and lock Marcela in my room. There I have some work I wish her, without fail, to perform; you must not think me vexed with her.

Dor.—(To Marcela.) What's the trouble, Marcela?

Marcela.—(To Dorotea.) The force of a powerful tyrant and my evil star. She locks me up because of Theodore.

Dor.—(To Marcela.) This prison you need not fear; love can pick all locks. (They leave.)

Dia.—So, Theodore, you wish to marry, do you?

Theodore.—I wish to do nothing, Señora, that will not please you, and believe me, my offense is less than you have been led to believe. You know envy, with her serpent's tongue, doth not dwell in deserts or on mountain tops, as the poet hath it, but in the palaces of the great.

Dia.—Then it is not true that you love Marcela?

Theo.—Well, I could live quite easily without her.

Dia.—Yet she told me for her you'd lost your head.

Theo.—"Tis of so little account, the loss would be slight. But I ask your ladyship to believe that, although I know Marcela to be worthy of much love, yet I do not love her as much as she merits.

Dia.—But have you not said sweet, endearing things that might have charmed hearts more difficult to conquer?

Theo.—Words are cheap.

Dia.—What did you say to her? Tell me, Theodore, that I may learn how men make love.

Theo.—They desire, they demand, they dress with a thousand fancies one poor truth—sometimes even one is lacking.

Dia.—Yes, but I wish the exact words.

Theo.—Your ladyship is pressing. Well, I said: Those eyes, those brilliant orbs lighten my darkness; the coral and the pearl of that celestial mouth—

Dia.—Celestial?

Theo.—Yes, this and similar words are the alphabet of love.

Dia.—You have bad taste, Theodore. Be not vexed, but I have lost much of the good opinion I had of you. Marcela has many more defects than charms; I know her intimately and must often scold—I do not wish to disgust you, but there are things if I should tell—but never mind, we'll drop her charms and defects, for I'm content that you should love and marry her—you, a skillful lover, now advise me in the interest of the friend of whom I have spoken and who for a long time has loved a man in birth beneath her. If she tells her love, she fails in the respect she owes herself, and if she is silent, jealousy devours; for this young man, though not lacking in wit, little suspects so great a love and is fearful and timid when near her.

Theo.—In truth, I know little of love, Señora, and know not what to counsel.

Dia.—Say, rather, you do not wish. What did you say to Marcela? What gallantries? Ah! if walls could talk—

Theo.—The walls could have nothing to say.

Dia.—Stop; you blush, and that which your tongue denies the tell-tale red confesses.

Theo.—I took her hand only, and cannot see why she complains, for I returned it to her.

Dia.—But that hand, like hand of queen, always returned kissed?

Theo.—(Aside.) Marcela was a fool. (Aloud.) It is true that I dared to cool the ardor of my lips upon the lily and the snow—

Dia.—The lily and the snow? I'm delighted to learn this remedy 'gainst fever of the lips. Now tell your counsel.

Theo.—If this lady loves a man so far beneath her that she feels the love degrading, let her conceive some clever ruse and in disguise embrace him.

Dia.—But would he not suspect? Would it not be better to slay him?

Theo.—We are told that Marcus Aurelius had the gladiator slain that was loved by his wife; but such crimes are worthy only of the heathen.

Dia.—To-day in this city, if we may believe what we hear, there are Faustinas and Messalinas aplenty, but the Lucretias are few and far between. Write me a sonnet on that subject, Theodore. Good-bye. (She falls purposely.) Oh! I have fallen, why do you stare? Give me your hand.

Theo.—(Extending his hand.) Respect forbade my offering it.

Dia.—Why cover with the corner of your mantle?

Theo.—Thus have I seen Octavio offer his, when accompanying you to mass.

Dia.—But what a hand! it must be seventy years of age. A hand so shrivelled that the cloth which covers it serves for a shroud. To wrap a hand before offering it to one who has fallen is to act like he who, called upon for help in sudden combat by a friend, runs for his coat of mail: before he can return the friend is dead. Besides, if the hand, like the man himself, be honorable, why veil?

Theo.—Please receive my thanks for the kindness you have shown.

Dia.—When you become a squire, then you can offer your hand wrapt in an ample mantle. To-day you are a secretary. But I caution you, be careful not to relate my fall if you desire to rise. (She leaves.)

Theo.—(Alone.) Can I trust this to be truth? It may be, since Diana is a woman; yet when asking for my hand all womanly fear was driven from her charming countenance by the roses of her cheeks. Her hand trembled; I felt it. What shall I do? I shall follow my happy destiny, even though the outcome be doubtful. I abandon fear to embrace courage—but to abandon Marcela—'tis unjust—women ought not to receive such insult as the price of their favor—yet they abandon us as they please—out of interest, of mere passing fancy. Oh love they die as little as men die.

DAY II.

SCENE I.

Theodore's room.

Enter Theodore.

Theodore.—New desire that assails me, avault! get thee gone!—dissolve into tenuous air. What folly to listen to this tormenting desire;—and yet where prize is great, is daring small; and priceless treasure exculpates my hope—but its foundations?—am I not building a diamond tower upon decaying straw?—No, it cannot be the fault of my desire if love has raised it to so high a pitch that I stand back affrighted—it is because I'm placed too lowly. But, let me lose all, if needs must, in following these vain yet flattering thoughts—for, after all, it is not to lose, to lose in such an enterprise. Others felicitate themselves upon their happiness, but I, to-day, upon my ruin; it is so glorious that happiness itself can justly envy it.

Enter Tristan.

Tristan.—If, in the midst of all your disturbing thoughts, you can give a moment to Marcela, here's a letter; she consoles herself for banished pleasures by writing to you. Ordinarily, we care little to see those of whom we have no need. Great lords, and you imitate them well, when in favor, are overwhelmed by proffered friendship; once fallen, their friends fly as though my noble lords were stricken with the plague. Marcela has fallen from favor—this letter, would it be well to disinfect it?

Theodore.—Give it to me, fool, although doubtless it ought to be disinfected, since it came here in your hands. (He reads.) “To Theodore, my husband”—my husband? What drivell! how silly!

Tris.—It is silly, isn't it?

Theo.—Ask Fortune if from the height to which she has raised me I can stoop to pick such an humble flower?

Tris.—Read it for my sake, however divine you may have grown. I can recall the time when Marcela, now an humble flower, was an eagle with splendid plumage.

Theo.—After gazing at the sun one cannot see even gold; I am astonished that I can see her at all.

Tris.—You maintain your dignity well—but what shall I do with the letter?

Theo.—This. (He pulls the letter from Tristan's hands and tears it.)

Tris.—What! you destroy it?

Theo.—Without hesitation.

Tris.—But why?

Theo.—Thus can I answer most quickly.

Tris.—You are unjustly rigorous.

Theo.—Do not wonder; I am another man.

Tris.—Methinks you lovers are apothecaries in love. Recipe: to be taken: suspicion and quarrels, followed by a bleeding. Recipe matrimonial: a bitter drug which needs various sweetenings and is purged by ennui and care after ten days of pleasure. Recipe: a celestial dose called Capricorn, of which you die unless patient. Recipe: jewels, laces and rich trifles for soothing applications. Finally the prescriptions must be paid for, love is dead, the papers torn; but you ought not to have destroyed Marcela's without first reading.

Theo.—Drink has obscured your wit.

Tris.—I fear that ambition has done as much for you.

Theo.—Tristan, each can have his share of happiness in this world; those who do not attain it fail because they dare not recognize their opportunities and aspire after fortune. I will die in this enterprise or be Count de Belflor.

Tris.—There was a Cæsar once who had for his device: "Either Cæsar or nobody." When failure came, a witty fellow wrote: "You wish to be Cæsar or nobody, your wish is fulfilled—and more; you were Cæsar, you are nobody."

Theo.—Nevertheless, Tristan, I embrace this enterprise; let fortune do what she will.

SCENE II.

A room in the apartments of the countess.

Enter Marcela and Dorotea.

Dorotea.—If among your companions there be one who shares your sorrow, I am she.

Marcela.—While I was imprisoned in that room my love for you increased by reason of your many kind services, and I assure you, Dorotea, you have no greater friend. Anarda doubtless thinks that I am ignorant of her intrigue with Fabio; this made her bold to tell of my affair.

Enter Theodore and Fabio.

Dorotea.—'Tis Theodore, now.

Marcela.—My life, my love!

Theodore.—Drop it, Marcela, drop it.

Mar.—But, my dear, I adore you.

Theo.—Be careful what you do and say. The tapestries of palaces have been known to speak, and the figures on them are to remind us that perchance behind them lurks a living listener. Fear has given voice to mutes and surely tapestries may talk.

Mar.—Have you read my letter?

Theo.—I tore it up without reading. I have received such a lesson that together I destroyed my love and letter.

Mar.—And those are the pieces in your hand?

Theo.—Yes, Marcela.

Mar.—And you renounce my love in this way?

Theo.—Is that not better than being ever in peril? Let us renounce these vain projects.

Mar.—(As though dazed.) What were you saying?

Theo.—I have decided to no longer give the countess cause for complaint.

Mar.—Alas! I have but too often perceived this sad truth.

Theo.—Good-bye, Marcela, may heaven keep you! We can be friends, at least.

Mar.—Can you, Theodore, say this to Marcela?

Theo.—I say it because I wish to be tranquil and desire to respect the honor of this house.

Mar.—But listen, I want to tell you——

Theo.—Leave me.

Mar.—Monster, can you cast me off in this way?

Theo.—What foolish rage! (He leaves.)

Mar.—Tristan, Tristan, what does it all mean?

Tristan.—Only inconstancy; Theodore is simply imitating certain young women of my acquaintance.

Mar.—Young women of your acquaintance?

Tris.—Yes; women all sugar and honey—women in whose mouths you'd think butter wouldn't melt.

Mar.—Explain what you mean.

Tris.—I have nothing more to say; Theodore has spoken. I am the handle of this sword; the seal on the letter; the mantle when he travels; the shadow of his body; the tail of the comet; the nail on his finger; I must be cut in pieces to be separated from him. (He leaves.)

Mar.—What do you think of that, Dorotea?

Dor.—I do not dare to think, and you had better be careful what you say, for tapestries may have ears.

Enter the countess, with Anarda.

Diana.—Such has been the occasion; do not mention it again.

Anarda.—But I am confused myself by the excuse you have given me: here is Marcela, Señora, talking with Dorotea.

Dia.—(Aside.) I could scarce meet an object more disagreeable to my sight. (Aloud.) Leave the room, both of you.

Marcela.—(To Dorotea.) Either she suspects or is jealous of me. (They leave.)

Ana.—May I speak freely?

Dia.—Speak as freely as you like.

Ana.—The two lords who have just left are fairly dying of love for you, while your disdain for them exceeds that shown by Lucretia and other classic matrons. When one is so haughty it sometimes happens—

Dia.—Your talk already tires me.

Ana.—With whom will your ladyship marry? The Marquis Ricardo, by his generosity and gallantry, does he not equal or even surpass our greatest lords? And would it not honor the finest lady in the land to become the wife of your cousin Frederic? Why did you so disdainfully dismiss them both?

Dia.—Because one is a fool, the other a simpleton, and you, Anarda, both rolled in one. I love them not, because I love; and I love because I hope for no fulfillment.

Ana.—Heavens! what do I hear! You—are in love?

Dia.—Am I not a woman?

Ana.—Yes, but cold as ice, which the fiery sun may touch but cannot cause to burn.

Dia.—But this ice has entirely melted at the feet of one most humble.

Ana.—Who can it be?

Dia.—Shame and knowledge of what I owe the honor of my house forbid my naming him.

Ana.—But, after all, Señora, 'tis a man; one of our own species, and I cannot see what harm it is to love him. Pasiphae and Semiramis loved less wisely.

Dia.—She who loves can hate if she will. Hate is the better choice; I will cease to love.

Ana.—But can you?

Dia.—Without a question. I have loved when I wished to love; I shall cease to love at my pleasure. (A guitar is heard.) I hear music; who is singing?

Ana.—Fabio and Clara.

Dia.—We'll listen awhile, perhaps their song may lighten my care. (Fabio and Clara, behind the scenes, sing to the picking of the guitar.)

Ana.—The song we have just heard contradicts you.

Dia.—I understood it well; but I know myself, and I shall prove that I can hate.

Ana.—That calls for superhuman force.

Enter Theodore.

Theodore.—Fabio has just told me, Señora, that you charged him to call me.

Diana.—You have kept me waiting long.

Theo.—I came as soon as I learned your commands. If I have failed in speed, pray pardon me.

Dia.—Have you seen these two lovers, the suitors for my hand?

Theo.—Yes, Señora.

Dia.—Are both comely and well formed?

Theo.—They are.

Dia.—I do not wish to decide without your counsel; which one would you advise me to marry?

Theo.—What counsel can I offer, Señora, in a matter which depends solely upon your taste? Whichever you may choose to place over me as lord and master will, in my eyes, be the better one.

Dia.—You reward me badly, Theodore, for esteeming you a worthy counsellor in such an important matter.

Theo.—But, Señora, have you not among your retainers one more ripe in age and wisdom? Octavio, your squire, has large experience and his age—

Dia.—I wish to choose a master that shall please you. Tell me, do you prefer the marquis Ricardo? Is he the finer man?

Theo.—I think he is, Señora.

Dia.—Then I choose the marquis. Go and get the reward given a bearer of good news. (She leaves with Anarda.)

Theo.—(Alone.) Was ever being so unfortunate! resolution more prompt or change more sudden? My fine projects

come to this! I wished on angel's wings to mount to heaven, behold how lowly I have fallen. How foolish he who trusts in vows of love! How loosely tied is lover's knot between unequals! Ought I to be blamed if those sweet eyes seduced me? They would have done as much for Ulysses—yet, what have I lost, after all. I'll play I've been delirious and fancied these mad thoughts. Vain ideas, return to that fool's paradise from whence you came: they fall more quickly who would rise too high.

Enter Tristan.

Tristan.—I come with beating heart to seek you. Is it true what they tell me?

Theodore.—Alas! Tristan, it is true if they tell you I am cruelly deceived.

Tris.—I have just seen two noble lords, stretched out each in an arm chair; the countess yawning; but I little thought she'd made her choice.

Theo.—Well, Tristan, she came just now, this weather-vane, this ever-changeable, this monster of instability, she came and ordered me to counsel which of the two she should marry, for she said she did not wish to marry without my advice. I was thunderstruck, and so like unto a fool I could not even answer folly. At last she owned the marquis pleased her best and charged me to announce the news.

Tris.—If I did not see you in such a sad state, and know it is inhuman to add to your affliction, I should recall to your mind your aspiration to become a Count.

Theo.—Yes, I admit I did aspire, and even yet——

Tris.—You can blame no one but yourself.

Theo.—Yes; yet how easy to believe a woman's eyes.

Tris.—I've often said, my dear master, there is no poisonous cup more dangerous than these same eyes of women.

Theo.—I am so angry and ashamed that I scarce dare to raise my eyes to look one in the face. 'Tis finished; now shall I bury in oblivion both love and aspiration; 'tis the sole remedy left to me.

Tris.—What contrition and repentance! but Marcela's left; return to her.

Theo.—Here she comes. We shall soon be friends.

Enter Marcela.

Marcela.—(Before she sees them, soliloquizing.) How difficult to feign a love one does not feel! How painful to forget! The more I seek to drive Theodore from my thoughts the more readily he returns.

Theodore.—Marcela, you do not speak; have you forgotten me?

Mar.—I have forgotten you so well that I wish I were someone else, so as never to recall you. I wish never to see nor to think of you, though you may rest assured I shall ne'er forget your conduct. How dare you name me? How can you twist your tongue to say that name, Marcela?

Theo.—I wished only to test your constancy, but I fear you have so little as to be scarce worth the test. I hear you have already cast your eyes upon another to replace me in your love.

Mar.—Never, Theodore, does a man of sense test either woman or glass; but do not think I can be deceived by such a shallow excuse. I know you, Theodore, and know that thoughts of shining gold have blinded reason. Well, how goes your enterprise? Will it succeed as you fondly wish? Will it not cost you more than it is worth? Are there no charms equal to the divine attractions of your adorable mistress? . . . But what's the matter, Theodore? you seem disturbed; has the wind shifted quarter? Do you return to one of your own rank, or do you come to mock and jibe at my credulity? Yet will I willingly confess, Theodore, you have given to my hope one happy day.

Theo.—If you wish to punish, Marcela, I bow submissively to your will—but, think, love is generous, so be not too severe: vengeance is cowardly in a conqueror. You have conquered, Marcela; pardon my error if aught of love remains for me. If I return to you, it is not because I cannot longer pursue

the hopes you spoke of; 'tis because attempted change revived your image; may your love revive likewise, since I confess you conquer.

Mar.—God is my witness that I do not wish to destroy the foundations of your greatness. Cherish your mistress; you do well. Persevere; for if now you quit, your mistress will accuse you of cowardice. Follow the happiness offered by your pride, as I already follow that offered by love. Be not offended that I have chosen Fabio, since you, yourself, abandoned me. If I have not bettered myself, he can at least right my wrong. Good-bye; I tire of talk with you and fear that Fabio, already half my husband, may come in and catch us here together. (She turns to leave.)

Theo.—Stop her, Tristan.

Tristan.—Listen, Señora, even if he stopped adoring you for an instant, he is more than willing to begin again. He mends the wrong of leaving you by coming back. Pray listen to me, dear Marcela, listen.

Enter Diana and Anarda.

Diana.—(Aside.) Theodore and Marcela here together!

Anarda.—(Low, to Diana.) To see them talking seems to irritate you.

Dia.—(Whispering to Anarda.) Draw this portière and screen them from our sight. Jealousy awakens my love.

Marcela.—For heaven's sake, Tristan, leave me.

Ana.—(Whispers to Diana.) Tristan seeks to reconcile; they must have quarreled.

Dia.—(Aside.) That lackey-pimp drives me mad.

Tristan.—The lightning does not flash and pass more rapidly than passed from Theodore's thought the cold charm of the countess. He despises her riches and counts your vivacious beauty a greater treasure. His love was like a shooting star. Come here, Theodore.

Dia.—(Aside.) The rascal's a clever courtier.

Theodore.—If she's already engaged to Fabio, and owns she loves him, what's the use of calling me?

Tris.—(Aside.) Now the other's getting huffed.

Theo.—Better let them get married.

Tris.—You, too! 'twould be a fine revenge, indeed. Here, come now, stop fooling; give me your hand and make peace.

Theo.—Fool, do you hope to persuade me against my will?

Tris.—For my sake, give me your hand, Soñora.

Theo.—Have I ever told Marcela that I loved another? yet she has owned—

Tris.—'Twas but a scheme to punish you.

Mar.—It was no scheme, it is the truth.

Tris.—Keep still, you foolish girl; come, I tell you. Have you both lost your wits?

Theo.—I asked her first, but I swear by all that's holy I'll not renew—

Mar.—May I be struck—

Tris.—Hush, hush, do not swear.

Mar.—Though very angry, I fear I'll faint.

Tris.—Try to be calm and I'll—

Dia.—(Aside.) How very adroit the rascal is!

Mar.—Let me alone, Tristan; I've something to do.

Theo.—Yes, let her alone, Tristan.

Tris.—Very well, she can go; I'm not stopping her.

Theo.—Retain her, Tristan.

Mar.—I will stay, my love.

Tris.—Why don't you both leave; no one hinders.

Mar.—Ah! my beloved, I cannot leave you.

Theo.—Nor can I leave you; no rock in the sea is more firm.

Mar.—Come to my arms!

Theo.—What delight to press you in mine!

Tris.—Since you had no need, why did you trouble me?

Ana.—(Whispering to Diana.) How do you like this sort of thing?

Dia.—(Low, to Anarda.) Now have I seen how much is worth the vow of man or woman.

Theo.—How could you say so many insulting things, Marcela?

Tris.—All is again harmony and peace. I'm quite content, for it disgraces a go-between not to conclude a bargain.

Mar.—If ever I abandon you for Fabio or any other, may I die of chagrin caused by you!

Theo.—To-day is my love reborn, and should I ever fail to adore you, may I, as just punishment, see you in the arms of Fabio.

Mar.—Do you wish to atone for your fault?

Theo.—What would I not do for you and to be with you.

Mar.—Say that all women are homely.

Theo.—Compared with you, most certainly. Now let me see what else you wish.

Mar.—I'm still somewhat jealous. Since you claim to be my love, tell me—it matters not that Tristan be here.

Tris.—Not in the slightest, even though you would speak of me.

Mar.—Tell me the countess is homely.

Theo.—She's ugly as the devil.

Mar.—Say she is giddy, rattle-headed.

Theo.—Extremely so.

Mar.—Is she not affected?

Theo.—No one could contradict it.

Dia.—(Whispering to Anarda.) I shall have to disturb them, otherwise I know not to what lengths they may go. I'm cold as ice and yet I burn.

Ana.—I beg you, Señora, do not let yourself be seen.

Tris.—If you'd like to hear the countess ridiculed, her affected speech and mincing manners, just listen to me.

Dia.—(Whispering to Anarda.) Listen to his ridicule! Did you ever hear such impudence?

Tris.—Now, in the first place, she——

Dia.—I'll not be fool enough to await the second.

Enter Diana, followed by Anarda, from behind the portière.

Marcela.—I must be going, Theodore. (She bows to the countess and leaves.)

Tristan.—Heavens! the countess!

Theodore.—The countess!

Diana.—Theodore.

Theo.—Señora, will you permit—

Tris.—(Aside.) The storm breaks, the thunder peals; I'll not await the lightning. (He leaves.)

Dia.—Anarda, bring yonder table. I wish Theodore to write a letter at my dictation.

Theo.—(Aside.) I tremble from head to foot. Could she have heard our talk?

Dia.—(Aside.) Jealousy has rekindled my love, which burns more fiercely than before. This ingrate loves Marcela—and I, have I not charms enough to be loved? Yet he still thinks of me, though but to mock.

Theo.—(Aside.) She mutters and sighs. In palaces one must learn to be silent. Would to heaven I had borne in mind that tapestries have ears and walls can speak!

Anarda.—I have brought the table and this small writing-desk.

Dia.—Approach, Theodore, and make ready to write.

Theo.—(Aside.) She'll have me slain or drive me from her house.

Dia.—Write—but you cannot be comfortable with your knee on that hard floor—Anarda, bring hither a cushion.

Theo.—Thank you, Señora, I'm very comfortable.

Dia.—Do as I say.

Theo.—(Aside.) These honors make me suspicious, following so closely upon anger and just cause for complaint. I fear she will not be as careful to keep my head comfortably on my shoulders. (Aloud.) I await your pleasure, Señora.

Dia.—I wish you to write. (She sits down.)

Theo.—(Aside.) I would that I could cross myself a thousand times.

Dia.—"When a woman of rank has declared herself to a man beneath her, it is despicable in him to speak to another. But he who knows not how to appreciate his good fortune, may he remain, what he is, a fool."

Theo.—"A fool." You wish to add nothing else?

Dia.—What else would you have me add? Fold it and seal.

Ana.—(Whispers to Diana.) What is it you are writing, Señora?

Dia.—(Whispers to Anarda.) Folly inspired by love.

Ana.—(Whispers.) But whom do you love, Señora?

Dia.—Cannot you see, simpleton, when it seems to me I hear the very stones reproach me?

Theo.—The letter is sealed; it lacks but the address.

Dia.—Upon it place your own, Theodore; but keep it from Marcela. Perhaps you may be able to comprehend if you read it at your leisure. (She and Anarda leave.)

Theo.—(Alone.) What strange confusion! What inconstancy! What fits and starts in the fever of her love!

Enter Marcela.

Marcela.—What did the countess say, my precious one? I waited trembling in the adjoining room.

Theodore.—She told me that she wished to marry you with Fabio; the letter that she had me write is to be sent to her country estates, and commands money to be forwarded for your dowry.

Mar.—What's this you say?

Theo.—You know how imperious she is. She does it for your good; and since you are to marry Fabio, I trust you will neither in sport nor earnest mention me again.

Mar.—But listen—

Theo.—It is too late to complain. (He leaves.)

Mar.—(Alone.) No, I cannot believe that to be the true cause of this outrage. Some new hope given by my foolish mistress has brought about this change. In her hands he's

like an endless chain of buckets: when he's down she fills, and when he rises high she empties him of hope. Alas! for me, Theodore, most ungrateful! As soon as her greatness strikes your sight I am forgotten; if she loves you, you leave me; if she leaves you, you love me. Could patience or love endure this?

Enter the Marquis Ricardo and Fabio.

Marquis.—I came here with all speed, for I am very anxious to thank her for this gracious kindness.

Fabio.—Go quickly, Marcela, and tell the countess that the Marquis Ricardo has arrived.

Marcela.—(Aside.) Tyrannical jealousy! where will you lead me, vain and foolish thoughts?

Fab.—Are you not going?

Mar.—At once.

Fab.—Yes, go at once and tell her that our new master, her husband, awaits her here. (Marcela leaves.)

Marq.—I choose you for my valet, Fabio. I shall give you a purse of shining gold and a horse of purest race. You have served the countess and I wish you to be my friend.

Fab.—Behold me at your feet!

Marq.—'Tis a reward too little for my great happiness.

Enter the countess.

Diana.—Your lordship here?

Marquis.—Ought I not hasten to thank you for the most gracious message you sent me by Fabio? the pleasant news that after that refusal, which nearly caused my death, you have deigned to choose me for your husband—or, rather, for your slave; permit me to thank you on bended knees for a gift so large that I fear it will turn my brain. Little did I hope to merit so great a boon. My happiness exceeds my fondest hopes.

Dia.—I seek to recall the circumstance, but seek in vain. I, send for you? Surely, you are jesting.

Marq.—Fabio, what does this mean?

Fabio.—Think you I should have dared to tell such news and bring you here, unless by command of Theodore?

Dia.—Marquis, 'tis Theodore's error; he heard me praise and rate above my cousin Frederic your rare and generous qualities. From this he fancied I had chosen you. I pray your lordship to pardon and forget the folly.

Marq.—Were it not that your presence insures his safety, I should not be able to contain myself. Believe me, I still humbly beg for your favor, and trust that my constancy will finally triumph. (He leaves.)

Dia.—Do you think this a smart trick?

Fab.—Can your ladyship blame me?

Dia.—Call Theodore at once. (Aside.) How lightly tripped the marquis, and I how weighted with sorrow!

Fab.—(Aside.) Here's that purse of shining gold and blooded horse gone to pot. (He leaves.)

Dia.—(Alone.) Tormenting jealousy, where will you not lead me? What unfortunate beings we are when we follow the sad counsels of this passion, which breaks down all the barriers erected by virtue. Danger surrounds me on all sides, and if in this storm and stress I abandon myself to love, can I avoid shipwreck?

Enter Theodore and Fabio,

Fabio.—(To Theodore.) He wished to kill me; but, to speak the truth, the loss of gold and horse touched me more.

Theodore.—Take my advice. Count Frederic is sick at heart over her ladyship's choice of the marquis; go, announce the marriage broken off and he'll reward you liberally for the welcome news.

Fab.—I shall run. (He leaves.)

Diana.—I'm glad he's gone.

Theo.—Torn by conflicting emotions, I read and reread your letter for an hour. I fathomed your thought and found my cowardice due solely to respect. I frankly own I was a

fool, since the bounty shown me should have destroyed all timidity. I love you, Señora, with a love profound yet respectful—pardon, I tremble—

Dia.—I believe you, Theodore. Why should you not love me; I am your mistress, and duty demands your love, since I esteem and favor you beyond my other servants.

Theo.—I fail to comprehend this language.

Dia.—There is nothing to comprehend further than my words express; do not permit yourself to pass this limit even in thought. Curb your desire, for the most trifling favor given by a woman of my high rank to one so humble as yourself ought to suffice to make you happy and content for all the balance of your life.

Theo.—I beg your ladyship to pardon my boldness, but there are times when your brilliant mind fails to aid your judgment. Was it well or right to offer me so large a hope, that I, unable to bear such great happiness, must lie sick in bed more than a month? No sooner do I look upon another than you inflame, and if I burn, you become ice. Leave me to Marcela and pardon if I recall that oft-told tale of "The Dog in the Manger." Filled with jealousy, you are not willing that I should marry Marcela, and as soon as I abandon her, you treat me in a way that drives me mad and makes me think your bounties are but vain illusions of the night. Eat or permit eating. I cannot be sustained by such uncertain hopes, and shall return to her, who, at least, loves me.

Dia.—This I cannot permit, Theodore. You must renounce Marcela. Choose any other girl you wish, but Marcela, never; my decision is irrevocable.

Theo.—Your decision is irrevocable? and does your ladyship think that power to love or not to love depends upon our will? Can I, to please you, love one not to my taste? I adore Marcela and she returns my love—'tis honorable and—

Dia.—You villain, your insolence shall cost your life. (She slaps him.)

Theo.—What is your ladyship doing?

Dia.—(Slapping him again.) Treating you as an infamous wretch like yourself should be treated.

Enter Fabio, with count Frederick.

Fabio.—Stop, sir; stop.

Frederic.—Perhaps we'd better; but, no, we'll enter. What's the matter, Señora?

Diana.—Nothing; merely one of those disagreements common at times between mistress and servant.

Fred.—Is it convenient to receive my call?

Dia.—Yes, I wish to speak to you.

Fred.—I regret that I came when you are in such an ill humor.

Dia.—Always pleased to see you, Frederick. Don't let that trifle worry you. Follow me into my apartments, I wish to share with you my intentions regarding the marquis. (She leaves.)

Fred.—Fabio, I suspect that this anger conceals a secret.

Fab.—I do not know. I am confounded to see her ladyship treat Theodore in this outrageous fashion; she never did so before.

Fred.—His blood flows freely. (Fabio and the count leave.)

Theodore.—(Alone.) Is this the way great ladies love? She is a fury, not a woman. Charming hand, why did I not cover you with a thousand kisses in recognition of this loving punishment? I little thought, however, to find that hand so hard: 'twas but to approach me that you struck; none other would have found delight in this proof of love.

Enter Tristan.

Tristan.—I'm like a coward's sword. I arrive when 'tis too late.

Theodore.—Alas! Tristan.

Tris.—What does this mean, Señor? your handkerchief is stained with blood.

Theo.—"Tis jealousy that would drive in love.

Tris.—High heavens! 'tis a strange jealousy.

Theo.—Be not astonished at this folly of amorous desire.

She views my face as a mirror reflecting her dishonor, and hence she wishes to destroy it.

Tris.—If a Johanna or a Lucy attacks me in a fury of suspicion, if she rips from my back the shirt she has made, if she pulls out a handful or two of hair or maps my face with her charming nails to learn if I have been guilty of some slight infidelity, well—what can you expect of such as she; but when a great lady like the countess loses to this extent the respect she owes herself, 'tis villainous.

Theo.—She'll make a raving maniac of me yet, Tristan. First, she adores me, then she abhors me. She does not wish me to have Marcela nor does she wish me for herself. If I speak she repulses, if I am silent she finds pretext to make me talk; she is, indeed, "The Dog in the Manger." She eats not, nor will she permit others to eat.

Tris.—A tale is told that once a learned doctor had a maid and a valet who quarrelled constantly; they wrangled at dinner, they squabbled at supper, and often in the early morning their disputes robbed their master of sleep, while during the day they kept him from study. One morning, chancing to return home unexpectedly, he entered a bed-chamber and there found the maid and valet clasped in each other's arms. Thank God, said he, I find you for once at peace. Some day 'twill be the same with you.

* Enter Diana.

Diana.—Theodore.

Theodore.—Señora.

Tristan.—(Aside.) This sprite seems to be everywhere at once; 'tis uncanny.

Dia.—I only came to see how you are.

Theo.—As you see, Señora.

Dia.—Are you well?

Theo.—Very well.

Dia.—But I do not hear you say: at your service.

Theo.—With such treatment, I cannot remain long in your service.

Dia.—How little you know me!

Theo.—So little, indeed, that I hear but cannot comprehend you. I do not understand your words, but I feel your blows. You are indignant if I love you and insulted if I do not love you; you write if I forget, and if I remember, you are offended. You wish me to understand and to appreciate you, and yet, if I appreciate, I am but a fool. Kill me, Señora, or grant me life; put an end to these torments.

Dia.—What! you have been bleeding?

Theo.—(Ironically.) Oh! not at all.

Dia.—Where is your handkerchief? give it to me.

Theo.—Here; but why do you wish it?

Dia.—Why do I want it? For your blood. Go speak to Octavio, whom I told just now to give to you two thousand crowns (escudos).

Theo.—Two thousand crowns, and for what?

Dia.—To buy handkerchiefs. (She leaves.)

Theo.—Did folly ever equal it?

Tris.—'Tis like a fairy tale, master.

Theo.—She gives me two thousand crowns.

Tris.—At that same rate 'twould please me well to take of slaps a score or more.

Theo.—She said it is to buy handkerchiefs! and she took away mine stained with my blood!

Tris.—Well, she paid the price. 'Tis first night's rights upon your nose.

Theo.—The Dog in the Manger caresses after she bites.

Tris.—All shall finish as in my doctor's tale.

Theo.—Heaven grant it!

DAY III.

SCENE I.

A street in Naples.

Enter the marquis Ricardo, Frederic and Cello.

Marquis.—You saw this?

Frederic.—With my own eyes.

Marq.—And she slapped his face?

Fred.—She did, indeed. Servants are irritating, but I do not believe this occasioned her anger, for when a woman like her strikes a man's face there must be another motive. Besides, 'tis easily seen he grows daily in her favor.

Marq.—She is a countess—and he a servant.

Fred.—She seeks her ruin. When an earthenware and iron pôt sailed down the stream together, earthenware wisely avoided iron for fear that if they bumped he should be broken; so when clay—the woman, strikes iron—the man, she runs great risk of ruin.

Marq.—I wonder at her pride and bizarre conduct, and now, too, I understand her strange treatment of me that day; since then Theodore has had horses, pages, fine clothes and jewels which could have come only from her.

Fred.—Before this is spoken of in Naples and the honor of our rank is stained, whether our suspicions be false or true, he must die.

Marq.—It will be piety to kill him, even though she learns the truth.

Fred.—How shall we manage it?

Marq.—Most easily. In Naples there are men who live by this alone, and who receive in gold what they return in blood. We have only to seek a bravo and he will be dispatched immediately.

Fred.—I beg you let it be done at once.

Marq.—This very day he shall receive the just chastisement of his insolence.

Fred.—What think you of those fellows yonder?

Marq.—They have, indeed, every appearance of the bravo.

Fred.—Heaven, offended like ourselves, is pleased to aid our just designs.

Enter Tristan, newly dressed, with Furio, Antonelo and Lirano.

Furio.—You must, my dear fellow, wet our whistles on the strength of those fine new clothes you have been given.

Antonelo.—Our jolly Tristan will recognize our claim as just.

Tristan.—I will, my friends, with the greatest pleasure.

Lirano.—'Tis certainly a fine one, your new habit.

Tris.—Pshaw! it amounts to nothing, compared with what I shall shortly wear. If fortune does not fail, you shall see me soon secretary to the secretary.

Lir.—The countess Diana does much for your master, doesn't she?

Tris.—She's taken him under her wing; in fact, he's her right hand, for through him she dispenses all her favors.

Ant.—Deuce take her favors! let us drink.

Fur.—In this temple of Bacchus we can probably find some excellent lacryma-christi.

Tris.—No, let us drink Greek wine; I want to speak Greek, and nothing can teach the tongue so well as wine.

Marquis.—(To Frederic.) The better dressed must be the bravest; for do you not notice that all the others defer to him. Celio, call yonder fellow.

Celio.—Cavalier, before you enter this holy hermitage, the marquis, my master, wishes a word with you.

Tris.—My comrades, a great lord calls and awaits me, and I cannot politely refuse to go; drink some flagons and eat some cheese at my expense, while I learn what he wishes.

Ant.—'Tis well, comrade, but hasten. (He, Furio and Lirano leave.)

Tris.—What does your lordship wish?

Marq.—Your determined air has induced Count Frederic and me to request your aid. Will you dispose of a man for us, if well paid?

Tris.—(Aside.) By Jove, these are the suitors to the countess and there's some intrigue at work. I'll dissimulate and learn it.

Frederic.—Well, what do you say?

Tris.—I feared your lordship wished to mock our manner of life. Each must live by his trade, but most worthy of praise is that which gives man strength and courage. There

is not a sword in Naples which does not tremble at the sound of my name. You have heard of Hector; his name pales beside mine. What he was at Troy I am at Naples.

Fred.—You are just the man we seek. We mean business, and if your valor is equal to your name and you are willing to kill our man, we shall pay whatever you ask.

Tris.—Two hundred crowns will content me, were he a very devil.

Marq.—We'll give you three hundred, if you do it to-night.

Tris.—I need but his name and something on account as pledge of your good faith.

Marq.—You know of Diana, Countess of Belflor?

Tris.—Yes, I even have friends in her household.

Marq.—Could you kill one of her servants?

Tris.—As many as you like, male or female, it's all one to me; why, I'll kill the horses to her carriage if you wish.

Marq.—Very well, Theodore is the man we wish slain.

Tris.—Theodore? Then we must arrange it differently. As I happen to know he never goes out after dark, doubtless because he fears your resentment. Now, he has recently asked me to accompany and serve him, and if you will permit I'll enter his service; soon after I'll bleed him a couple of times in such a way that he'll need a requiem; and on you and me, gentlemen, never a shadow of suspicion shall fall. Do you like the plan?

Fred.—Very well; we could not have found in all Naples another who can do our work so surely. Enter his service, one of these days, unexpectedly kill him, then come to us for refuge.

Tris.—Gentlemen, to-day I need one hundred crowns.

Marq.—Here's fifty; and as soon as I see you in Diana's house you shall have a hundred; indeed, several hundred.

Tris.—I do not ask several hundred, if you keep your promise I am content. Rest easy and depend on me, I'll do the work. Iron-Arm, Break-Wall and Devil-May-Fear await me. I do not wish them to suspect our project.

Marq.—Your ideas are excellent; good-bye.

Fred.—What a lucky encounter!

Tris.—You can order his coffin.

Fred.—(To the Marquis.) What a clever cut-throat! (He, the Marquis and Celio leave.)

Tris.—(Alone.) I must warn Theodore at once. My comrades and the Greek wine must wait; happily, I see him coming. Hallo! Señor, where are you going?

Enter Theodore.

Theodore.—I hardly know, myself. I am bordering on madness and know not what I do or whither I go. One sentiment alone dominates me; to gaze with audacious eyes straight at the sun; but, alas! you saw yesterday how sweet the Countess spoke with me; well, to-day 'tis quite another tone; you'd scarce believe the countess knew me; and Marcela laughs at my discomfiture.

Tristan.—Let us move to a less conspicuous place, we must not be seen together.

Theo.—Not seen together? Why?

Tris.—I've learned of a plan to take your life.

Theo.—My life? Who would have me slain?

Tris.—Speak lower; think of the danger that menaces you. The marquis Ricardo and count Frederic wish your death; they have asked me to assassinate you, and have already agreed upon the price.

Theo.—What, the marquis and the count?

Tris.—From the treatment you receive they suspect the countess loves you, and, taking me for one of those lions of the night who gain their bread by crime, they have bought your death for three hundred crowns. I have already received fifty on account as pledge of their good faith. I told them that you had asked me to enter your service and that I should do so to kill you at my ease; hence you have nothing to fear at present.

Theo.—Would to heaven that someone would deliver me from a life more distasteful than death itself!

Tris.—You've passed the border now and become a full-fledged fool.

Theo.—Why should I not desire to die? Had Diana been able to find a plan to marry me without compromising the honor of her house, she would not have hesitated a moment; as her passion increases so does her fear of dishonor, and the more she loves, the more does she overwhelm me with coldness and disdain.

Tris.—And what would you say if I were able to overcome all your difficulties?

Theo.—That you are more resourceful than was Ulysses.

Tris.—If I find for you a generous father, who will make you in birth equal to the countess herself, won't you have the game in your own hands?

Theo.—Unquestionably.

Tris.—That's what you need and I'll find him. Count Ludovico, I've been told, sent a son twenty years ago to Malta; there he was captured and nothing has ever been heard of him since. The count shall be your father, and you his long-lost son; trust me to arrange it.

Theo.—But, think, Tristan, such a project may send us to the galleys or cost our lives.

Tris.—Don't worry; return home, and before noon tomorrow you shall be the husband of the countess. (He leaves.)

Theo.—(Alone.) I've other projects. I must seek a remedy for my distress, and absence is perhaps the most efficacious; this will put an end to all my woes.

SCENE II.

A room in the apartments of the countess.

Enter the countess and Theodore.

Diana.—Are you cured of your sadness, Theodore?

Theodore.—Ah! I adore my sadness; I cherish my woes and do not wish to be cured of the distress I endure, since I only suffer when I seek to free myself from suffering. Happy sorrows! so sweet to sustain, since he that sees himself perishing loves the cause. My sole chagrin is being forced to leave.

Dia.—You wish to leave me? Why?

Theo.—My life is threatened and your reputation——

Dia.—Ah! I feared as much.

Theo.—They envy me my sorrow, coming from so great a source. I ask permission to return to Spain.

Dia.—'Tis well. You will place yourself out of danger, and, although your absence will cause my tears to flow, it will dispel those suspicions that now tarnish my fair name. Since that day I slapped your face in the presence of my cousin Frederic, he has been so openly jealous that I must consent to your departure. Go to Spain: you can take six thousand crowns for the expense of your trip.

Theo.—My absence will silence your defamers. Permit me at your feet to express my thanks.

Dia.—Go, Theodore, at once. Do not delay; leave me, for I am a woman.

Theo.—You cry? What would you have me do?

Dia.—So, then, Theodore, you really leave me?

Theo.—Yes, Señora.

Dia.—Stay—no, leave—listen.

Theo.—What do you command?

Dia.—Nothing. Go.

Theo.—I leave.

Dia.—(Aside.) I die. Is there a torture equal to love? (Aloud.) Well, you have not left?

Theo.—Yes, Señora, I have left. (He leaves.)

Dia.—Cursed be honor! Detestable invention of men, you reverse the laws of nature! Let no one tell me your curb is beneficial or just. Cursed be he who invented you!

Reënter Theodore.

Theodore.—I came back to see if I can leave to-day.

Diana.—Can I tell? You do not suspect, Theodore, how painful it is to see you, else you would not return.

Theo.—I cannot banish myself from your sight, Señora. I live alone for you. I came back only to seek myself, for you and I are one. How can I separate from myself?

Dia.—If you must return again, do not seek me, and leave now, I beg you, for love struggles with honor, and your presence here gives love the upper hand; leave me, leave at once. You'll not go alone, since my heart accompanies you.

Theo.—May God preserve your ladyship!

Dia.—Cursed be my ladyship, since it separates me from him I adore. (Theodore leaves.) Now am I indeed alone in the world, without the light of my eyes. May they fully perceive the wrong they have done me and they that gazed so badly, may they cry well. My eyes were my misfortune; why were you fixed on him? But do not weep, for tears will soothe your sorrow. May they fully perceive the wrong they have done me, and they that gazed so badly, may they cry well.

Enter Marcela.

Marcela.—If, after my long service, I may humbly request a just recompense, permit me to ask a favor which will banish from your sight one that has had the misfortune to offend you.

Diana.—What do you mean, Marcela? What is the recompense? I am ready to listen.

Mar.—I am told that Theodore, fearing assassination, is leaving for Spain; if you will send me, also, as his wife, my presence will no longer offend you.

Dia.—Does he wish it, do you know?

Mar.—Think you I should have dared to ask if I had not reason to believe—

Dia.—But have you spoken with him?

Mar.—He has spoken with me. He asked me.

Dia.—(Aside.) How apropos comes this unhappiness!

Mar.—We have already arranged to make our trip as comfortable as possible.

Dia.—(Aside.) Pardon, honor, pardon the follies I do for love; but this time, at least, I can, without offending you, avoid this great unhappiness.

Mar.—Can you not decide?

Dia.—I cannot live without you, Marcela, and in wishing to leave me you wrong my fond attachment and Fabio's love: I shall marry you with Fabio, as he adores you. Let Theodore depart.

Mar.—I abhor Fabio and I adore Theodore.

Dia.—(Aside.) How cruel to declare her love to me. (Aloud.) Fabio is better adapted to you.

Mar.—Señora, I—

Dia.—Do not speak back to me. (She leaves.)

Mar.—(Alone.) How can my love overcome this tyranny? I am determined to resist and must find a way—yet no, 'twould be better to stop on the edge of this precipice. An ill-starred love is like a tree blighted by frost in the midst of its bloom. It rejoices the sight with the charm of its color, but what matters the beauty of its flowers if the hope of fruition be dead.

SCENE III.

Count Ludovico's apartment.

Enter count Ludovico and Camilo.

Camilo.—It is the only way to provide an heir to your estates and name.

Ludovico.—Each year I bear beyond the middle point of life is an enemy to marriage, and although a motive so legitimate, in spite of my years, might justify, I fear to decide. It might easily happen that I should have no children, but I should remain married. A young wife attached to an old husband is like the ivy to the elm—she embraces, she adorns, but the tree withers even while the garlands which cover it are most glorious. Do not again speak of marriage, Camilo, it serves but to recall my misfortune and renew my regret. For twenty years, deluded by vain hopes, I have each day awaited Theodore, and each day, too, has seen me weep.

Enter a Page.

Page.—A Greek merchant demands an audience with your lordship.

Ludovico.—Command him to enter. (The Page leaves.)

Enter Tristan and Furio, both dressed as Armenians and covered with turbans.

Tristan.—Permit me to kiss your hands, my lord, and may heaven fulfill your most ardent wish.

Ludovico.—Welcome, thrice welcome, Señor. What is the motive of your visit to this far-away land?

Tris.—I came from Constantinople to Cyprus, and from there to Venice in a ship loaded with rich Persian fabrics, and while in Italy resolved to look up a certain matter and to see

the greatness and surpassing beauty of this famous city of Naples.

Ludo.—Do you not find it most magnificent?

Tris.—Truly. Señor, my father was a merchant in Greece who principally trafficked in slaves. One day, at the fair of Azteclies, he bought a boy, the most beautiful ever formed by nature—a part of heaven come to earth. Turks sold him, and my father learned that he had been taken from a Maltese galley near Cephalonia by the vessels of a certain Ali-Pacha.

Ludo.—Camilo, my soul is stirred.

Tris.—My father took a fancy to the boy and, instead of selling him to the Turks, took him to Armenia, where he was raised with me and my sister.

Ludo.—Friend, stop a moment, stop;—emotion overcomes me.

Tris.—(Aside.) It strikes home; I'm doing well.

Ludo.—And his name? tell me his name.

Tris.—Theodore.

Ludo.—What sustaining power in truth. Tears water my gray hairs—but continue, my friend.

Tris.—Serpalitonio, my sister, and this beautiful boy—would to heaven he had been as homely as I!—raised together, fell in love at a tender age, and at barely sixteen, in my father's absence, found opportunity to embrace, with sad results. Theodore, fearing for his life, fled and left my sister to her fate. Catiborrato, my father, was touched less by my sister's misfortune than by the flight of his dearly beloved Theodore. Of this chagrin and of age he died, and shortly after we baptized the son of Theodore, for the Armenian church is Christian, though separated from yours. We named the child Termaconio, and he is one of the most beautiful boys in the city of Tepecas, where we reside. At Naples I inquired, as I, indeed, do everywhere, for Theodore, and a Greek slave at my lodging-house told me he was, perhaps, the son of Count Ludovico.

Ludo.—It is he; he lives, beyond a doubt, but where shall we find him?

Tris.—I inquired for your palace. I must have badly asked, for I was sent to that of a countess, the countess de Belfor, and the first person I saw——

Ludo.—How madly my heart beats.

Tris.—Was Theodore.

Ludo.—Theodore!

Tris.—He wished to fly and conceal himself, but it was impossible. I hesitated for a moment in my recognition, for age and a beard have changed him somewhat. I followed him, and at last he owned with shame it was he. He begged me not to speak of his adventure, for fear that having been a slave would injure him at Naples. And why, said I, should you, who are perhaps the son of one of the greatest lords of this city, feel humiliated to have been a slave, when not at fault? I, the son of a great lord, said he; what folly. Now, if this Greek slave spoke truth, I humbly beg you not to return your son to marry my sister, although she is as noble as he, but to permit at least his son to come to Naples to do homage at the feet of his illustrious grandfather.

Ludo.—Embrace me a thousand times! My joy confirms the truth of what you tell me! Ah! son of my soul, after so many years of absence I find you, to my great happiness. What do you counsel, Camilo? Ought I not to go at once to see and recognize him?

Camilo.—Without a doubt; let us run; let us fly; and may you find in his arms new life.

Ludo.—(To Tristan.) Friend, if you wish to go with me, my happiness will be greater. If, however, you wish to rest, await me here and ask as price of your good news my house and all I have, but do not ask me to wait a moment longer.

Tris.—I must leave you; I've some business concerning diamonds near here, but shall return as soon as you. Come, we must go, Mercaponies.

SCENE IV.

Street in Naples.

Enter Tristan and Furio.

Tristan.—They're still on their way, are they not?

Furio.—The old Count is fairly flying; he would wait neither for carriage nor servants.

Tris.—'Twould be a great joke should he prove to be his son in truth.

Fur.—Could there be any truth in such a mass of lies?

Tris.—(Removing his turban and robe.) Take away this turban and robe; though well disguised, I do not want to run the risk of being recognized.

Fur.—Disrobe more quickly; someone may come.

Tris.—What will not paternal love believe?

Fur.—Where shall I await you?

Tris.—At the Elm Tree tavern.

Fur.—Good-bye. (He leaves.)

Tris.—(Alone.) What a treasure is wit and a happy invention! I shall now put on my usual mantle and hat, which I kept concealed beneath that vast Armenian robe.

Enter the Marquis Ricardo and Count Frederic.

Frederic.—Here is the bravo that we hired to kill Theodore.

Marquis.—One word, my noble fellow; is this the way, among people of honor, a promise is kept? And one proud of his name, ought he not to accomplish more quickly what he so glibly promised?

Tristan.—Gentlemen——

Fred.—Think you, perchance, we are your equals?

Tris.—Do not condemn me unheard. I already serve Theodore, and he must die by this hand. But, think you, to kill him publicly would be to risk compromising you, gentlemen. Prudence is a celestial gift placed by the ancients above all other virtues. You may already count him among the dead. He is very melancholy, lives a retired life during the day and at night never leaves his room. Some great sorrow must have overtaken him. Trust me to act, I'll speedily dispatch him; do not precipitate matters, I know when and where to give him his quietus.

Fred.—It seems to me, Marquis, that there's considerable sense in what he says. He has already entered Theodore's service; so the job's begun. He'll kill him, I feel sure.

Marq.—Yes, I think so. He's as good as dead.

Fred.—Let us speak lower.

Tris.—Now that he is as good as dead, have not your lordships, say fifty crowns, about you? I have had a good horse offered me, and you understand, gentlemen, how valuable such a beast may prove in certain circumstances.

Marq.—Here it is; be assured that, the deed once done, payment will be forthcoming.

Tris.—I hazard my life, but give good service. Good-bye; I do not wish to be seen from the balconies of the countess, talking with your lordships.

Fred.—That's right, be discreet.

Tris.—Judge me by the way I do the deed. (He leaves.)

Fred.—He's a brave fellow.

Marq.—Ingenious and adroit.

Fred.—He'll kill him neatly.

Enter Celio.

Celio.—Was ever so strange and fabulous an event heard of?

Frederic.—Celio, where you going? Stop, what has happened?

Cel.—A most remarkable thing, which perhaps may be painful for both of you to hear. Do you not see the crowd now entering the palace of Count Ludovico?

Marquis.—Is he dead?

Cel.—I beg you listen. The crowd hurries to congratulate him upon finding his long-lost son.

Marq.—Why should we care whether he be happy or not? It has no bearing on our projects.

Cel.—Has it no bearing, if the long-lost son proves to be precisely that Theodore, secretary to the object of your hopes, Diana?

Fred.—This completely upsets me.

Marq.—He, the son of Count Ludovico; how did you learn this news?

Cel.—The tale is told by so many people and in such various ways that I have had neither time nor opportunity to trace it to its source.

Fred.—Were ever beings more unfortunate!

Marq.—My expected happiness has changed to despair.

Fred.—I wish to learn the truth immediately; I shall go to Ludovico's.

Marq.—I'll follow you.

Cel.—You there will learn I spoke the truth.

SCENE V.

A room in the apartments of the countess.

Enter Theodore, in a travelling dress, and Marcela.

Marcela.—You are determined to leave, Theodore, are you?

Theodore.—You are the sole cause; rivalry between two persons so unequal in rank can produce nothing but misfortune.

Mar.—An excuse as false as your love—which was feigned. You never loved me; you loved only the countess, and now that you find how vain are your hopes* in this direction, you seek to forget her.

Theo.—I?—love Diana?

Mar.—Yes; it's too late to deny your foolish aspiration. Your undoing is the just price of your insincerity, since she has known how to guard her honor, which has placed between you insurmountable barriers of ice. I am revenged, and if you recall me, remember that you are a man that I abhor.

Theo.—'Tis folly to feign anger, that you may marry Fabio.

Mar.—You marry me, since your disdain provokes it.

Enter Fabio.

Fabio.—Theodore remains with us so short a time that you do well, Marcela, to spend those brief moments with him.

Theodore.—No need to be jealous, Fabio, of one who is so soon to be separated from her by many miles of sea.

Fab.—Then you are really going?

Theo.—As you see.

Fab.—My mistress comes to see you.

Enter the countess, with Anarda and Dorotea.

Diana.—Already prepared to leave, Theodore?

Theodore.—Would that I had wings to my feet rather than spurs!

Dia.—(To Anarda.) Did you make ready the linen and clothes as I ordered?

Anarda.—All are packed.

Fabio.—At last, I believe he's really leaving.

Marcela.—And you are still jealous?

Dia.—(To Theodore.) Come here a moment, I would have a word in private.

Theo.—At your service, Señora.

Dia.—(Aside, to Theodore.) You are leaving, Theodore, and I adore you.

Theo.—Your cruelty compels me to go

Dia.—You know who I am. What can I do?

Theo.—You weep?

Dia.—No, there's something in my eye.

Theo.—Could it be love?

Dia.—That's been there a long time, but now it doubtless wishes to get out.

Theo.—I go, mistress mine, but my soul remains with you. You'll not perceive my absence, for in spirit I shall serve you. Have you aught else to command? for I am yours.

Dia.—How sad a day!

Theo.—I go, mistress mine, but my soul remains with you.

Dia.—You weep?

Theo.—No, there's something in my eye, too.

Dia.—Could it be my folly?

Theo.—That's been there a long time.

Dia.—I have added a number of trifles to your effects. Pardon my inability to do more. When you unwrap these sad remains of our cruel victory do not forget that Diana has bathed these gifts with bitter tears.

Ana.—(To Dorotea.) They're both undone.

Dorotea.—(To Anarda.) How difficult to conceal is love.

Ana.—He had better remain; see, they are clasping hands and exchanging rings.

Dor.—Like the Dog in the Manger, Diana will die of hunger.

Ana.—She presses his hand too late.

Dor.—Eat or permit others to eat.

Enter Count Ludovico and Camilo.

Ludovico.—I trust that joy and my age will suffice to excuse the liberty I have taken in entering your house so freely.

Diana.—Pray tell me, Señor Count, what has occasioned joy?

Ludo.—Then you alone, Señora, of all Naples are unacquainted with the news. Crowds surround me, I can scarce traverse the streets, though I have not as yet seen my son.

Dia.—What son? I do not understand.

Ludo.—Has your ladyship never heard that twenty years ago I sent my son to Malta, where he was captured by the galleys of one Ali-Pacha?

Dia.—I think I've heard the tale.

Ludo.—Well, heaven has granted me knowledge of this son after he has passed through many vicissitudes.

Dia.—I thank you, Count, for this welcome news; believe me, I share——

Ludo.—But, Señora, you must give me, in return, my son, who serves you, little thinking I am his father. Would that his mother had lived to see this day!

Dia.—Your son serves me? Could it be Fabio?

Ludo.—No, Señora, it is not Fabio; his name is Theodore.

Dia.—Theodore?

Ludo.—Yes, Señora.

Theodore.—What do I hear?

Dia.—Speak, Theodore, speak; is the count your father?

Ludo.—It is he.

Theo.—Señor Count, I ask your lordship to think——

Ludo.—I think of nothing, my darling son, except to die of joy in your arms.

Dia.—How marvellous!

Anarda.—Then Theodore's rank equals yours, Señora?

Theo.—Am I really your son?

Ludo.—Had I the shadow of a doubt, I need but look upon you: such as you are now was I at your age.

Theo.—At your feet I beg——

Ludo.—Say nothing more. I'm beside myself with joy! God bless you! What a royal presence! How legibly has nature written in your face my noble race. Come, come at once and take possession of my house and all. Enter through my portals, crowned with this kingdom's noblest arms.

Theo.—I was at the point of leaving for Spain, and I must——

Ludo.—For Spain? Come and find Spain in my arms.

Dia.—I beg you, Señor Count, permit Theodore to remain here awhile, that he may calm himself and robe as befits his rank.

Ludo.—I yield to your prudence, although it gives me pain to leave him for a moment. I go alone, but beg your ladyship not to permit day to turn to night without my darling in my arms.

Dia.—I pledge my word.

Ludo.—Good-bye, my dear Theodore.

Theo.—I kiss your feet a thousand times.

Ludo.—Camilo, death may strike me when he will.

Camilo.—What a well-formed, handsome fellow.

Ludo.—I dare dwell but little on my great good fortune; else will my wits go mad. (He and Camilo leave.)

Fabio.—(To Theodore.) Permit us to kiss your hand.

Dorotea.—Yes, accord us this favor.

Ana.—As a great lord.

Marcela.—Great lords are affable; embrace us.

Dia.—Step aside, give me your place and talk no more folly. Will your lordship permit me, Señor Theodore, to kiss your hand?

Theo.—Permit me, rather, to fall in adoration at your feet; I am more than ever your slave.

Dia.—Leave us, all of you; I wish to be alone with him awhile.

Mar.—(To Fabio.) What do you think of it, Fabio?

Fab.—She's too much for me.

Dor.—(To Anarda.) How does it strike you?

Ana.—That already my mistress wishes to be no longer the Dog in the Manger.

Dor.—At last she eats.

Ana.—But not to repletion.

Dor.—That will come later. (The servants leave.)

Dia.—Your lordship no longer says: I go, mistress mine, but my soul remains with you.

Theo.—You grow facetious over fortune's favor. (He kisses her hand.)

Dia.—You're growing bold.

Theo.—We may now treat each other as equals. I act as great lords act.

Dia.—You do not seem like one to me.

Theo.—I believe you already love me less and are sorry to see me your equal; you would prefer to see me still a servant, since love is best pleased when the loved one is inferior.

Dia.—You deceive yourself, for you are wholly mine, and this night I shall marry you.

Theo.—Fortune can give me no more, it need not try.

Dia.—In all the world there will not be a woman more happy; but go and dress.

Theo.—I must go to see my new possessions and this father I have found, I know not how or whence.

Dia.—Then good-bye, Señor Count.

Theo.—Good-bye, Countess.

Dia.—Listen.

Theo.—What?

Dia.—What? Is this the way a servant should speak to his mistress?

Theo.—The tables are turned; at present, I am master.

Dia.—Remember, do not give me further cause to be jealous of Marcela, however painful that may be.

Theo.—People of my rank do not condescend to love servants.

Dia.—Be careful what you say.

Theo.—Does it offend?

Dia.—And who am I?

Theo.—My wife. (He leaves.)

Dia.—(Alone.) I have nothing more to desire. As Theodore said: Fortune need not try to add to my happiness.

Enter the Marquis and Count Frederic.

Marquis.—Have your friends no part in the general rejoicings?

Diana.—As great a part as your lordships desire.

Frederic.—We awaited your announcement of the high rank to which your domestic has been raised, to congratulate you.

Dia.—Then congratulate me now, for he has become a Count and my husband. (She leaves.)

Marq.—What do you think of that?

Fred.—It makes me think I am bereft of reason.

Marq.—Alas! if that scoundrel had only killed him.

Enter Tristan.

Frederic.—He's coming now.

Tristan.—(Aside.) My scheme works well; a lackey's wit has fooled an entire city.

Marquis.—Hector, or whoever you may be, stop.

Tris.—My name is Soul-Extractor.

Fred.—You proved it a name well fitting!

Tris.—Had he not become a Count he should have become a corpse before this eve.

Marq.—What matters his rank?

Tris.—When we agreed upon three hundred crowns, 'twas to kill the servant Theodore, not Count Theodore; 'tis a different thing, the price must be augmented. 'Tis one thing to kill half a dozen servants, already nearly dead of hunger, blighted hope or envy, and quite another to slay a noble lord.

Fred.—What do you ask to kill him this very night?

Tris.—One thousand crowns.

Marq.—I promise you this sum.

Tris.—I must have earnest money.

Marq.—This golden chain——

Tris.—Count the money.

Fred.—I go to provide the sum.

Tris.—And I to kill him, but listen——

Marq.—What do you require?

Tris.—Sealed lips. (The marquis and Frederic leave.)

Enter Theodore.

Theodore.—I saw you speak with those assassins.

Tristan.—The biggest fools in all Naples. They have given me this chain and promised me a thousand crowns to kill you to-day.

Theo.—This sudden change in my fortune, is it a scheme of yours? I live in fear and trembling.

Tris.—Should you once hear me speak Greek, you would place implicit confidence in my tale beyond the others. Upon

my life, 'tis an easy thing to Hellenize: in short, you need but to utter sounds and speak as with the other tongues. What charming names I spoke; they must be Greek, since no one understands them. I made it pass for Greek, at any rate.

Theo.—This gives me food for anxious thought, for if they ferret our your trick, my head goes off, at least.

Tris.—You stop to think of this?

Theo.—You must be a very devil.

Tris.—Let fortune act and calmly await the end.

Theo.—The countess comes.

Tris.—I'll go, that I may not be seen. (He leaves.)

Enter Diana.

Diana.—You've not been yet to see your father?

Theodore.—Grave cares hold me back; in fact, I ask permission to retire to Spain.

Dia.—'Tis an excuse to join Marcela.

Theo.—I, join Marcela?

Dia.—Then, what's the matter?

Theo.—I hardly dare to tell you.

Dia.—Speak freely, though it stain my honor.

Theo.—Tristan, who merits a prize for roguery, seeing my love and sorrow, knowing, too, that count Ludovico had lost a son, arranged this scheme. I'm one of the rank and file, the son of my wit and pen. The count, however, believes me to be his son, and although I might marry you and be both rich and happy, I cannot deceive you. I am not noble, but I am at least honest. So kindly permit me to go to Spain, that I may not deceive your love nor injure your rank.

Dia.—You have proved the nobility of your soul by telling me the truth, and your folly by believing that I would allow this to hinder our marriage. I wished to find a method to equalize our rank; it has been found; I ask no more. Happiness is not to be found in greatness, but in a union of souls. I shall accept your hand; and in yonder well Tristan will be discreet.

Enter Tristan.

Tristan.—I crown your love with happiness and find my reward at the bottom of the well! Ungrateful woman!

Diana.—You heard me? Listen, I'll promise to be your best friend if you'll agree never to reveal the secret.

Tris.—It is of the greatest importance to me that the secret should be well kept.

Theodore.—Listen. What mean these cries and all these people?

Enter Ludovico, Frederic and the marquis, with their servants, Fabio and the maids of the countess.

Marquis.—(To Ludovico.) We wish to accompany your son.

Frederic.—All Naples awaits him.

Ludovico.—Pardon, Diana, but a carriage, surrounded by all the Neapolitan nobility on horseback, awaits Theodore. Come, my son, to your own home; to see again, after so many years of absence, the place where you were born.

Diana.—Before he leaves, I wish you to know that I am his wife.

Ludo.—Fortune clinches her wheel with a golden nail. I came to seek one child, I have found two.

Fred.—Come forward, Ricardo, and congratulate them.

Marq.—I can congratulate you, not only on your marriage, but that you are still alive. Jealous of the countess, I promised this scoundrel a thousand crowns, not to mention the gold chain, to assassinate you. Have him arrested; he is a thief.

Theodore.—No, he who defends his master does but his duty.

Marq.—Not a thief, then who is this pretended bravo?

Theo.—My servant; and to recompense his clever defense of my life and other obligations, I marry him to Dorotea, since her ladyship has given Marcela to Fabio.

Marq.—I'll furnish Marcela's wedding dowry.

Fred.—And I, Dorotea's.

Ludo.—Good; there remains to me a son, an heir and the dowry of the countess.

Dia.—(To the public.) Now, most noble audience, I beg you, tell no one Theodore's secret; and so shall end, with your kind permission, the famous comedy of "The Dog in the Manger."

